

The Epistles for All Christians

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The Epistles for All Christians

Epistolary Literature, Circulation, and The Gospels
for All Christians

By

David A. Smith



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Abbreviations

The abbreviations used can be found in Billie Jean Collins, Bob Buller, and John F. Kutsko, *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014). Below is a list of abbreviations not found in *The SBL Handbook of Style*.

AJGRP	Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman Period
AHB	<i>Ancient History Bulletin</i>
AJS	<i>American Journal of Sociology</i>
ARA	<i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BMSEC	Baylor Mohr-Siebeck Studies on Early Christianity
BST	Bible Speaks Today
CCS	Classical Culture and Society
CIM	Christianity in the Making
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
EBC	Expositor's Bible Commentary
EBS	Encountering Biblical Studies
EGGNT	Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament
ISS	International Scientific Series
ITL	International Theological Library
LHJS	Library of Historical Jesus Studies
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NGS	New Gospel Studies
NIVAC	New International Version Application Commentary
NovTSup	Novum Testament Supplements
NTAF	<i>The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers</i>
NTR	New Testament Readings
RNTAF	<i>Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers</i>
SchL	Schweich Lectures on Biblical Archeology
THK	Theologischer HandKommentar
THNTC	Two Horizons New Testament Commentary
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament

Introduction

I have two overarching arguments: first, authors' expected circulation and the actual early Christian practice of circulation of epistolary literature is, contrary to prior opinion, relevant for *The Gospel for All Christians* (henceforth *GAC*) debate; and, second, as a corollary point, the authorship and circulation of epistolary literature do not suggest that the early Christian authors, both of epistolary texts and gospels, wrote for isolated communities.¹ In this sense, I consider the relevance of the circulation of *epistolary* literature for understanding the circulation of *gospel* literature. This is because epistolary literature reveals how some early Christian authors thought of audience in terms of how widely they expected their text to circulate initially, and how early Christians actually circulated their texts beyond their initial audiences. For the sake of clarity, I will not speculate on the intentions of the evangelists. Rather, I will suggest on the basis of the expectations of epistolary authors and the actual circulation of early Christian literature (both gospels and epistles), that if the gospel writers did not expect their texts to circulate they would have been the exception rather than the rule. To state it even more strongly, even if the evangelists *did* write their text for their respective communities, it is unlikely that their Gospels would stay in their communities. In this sense, the *GAC* position is strengthened by consideration of the epistles for all Christians. Although consideration of epistolary literature cannot *prove* that the evangelists expected their Gospels to circulate beyond a single locale, thus I shift the burden of proof to those who would argue that the evangelists wrote for a single community. In other words, I am attempting to show that Bauckham was correct. It has been a mistake of gospel scholarship to assume that Gospels were written to isolated communities without argument. The intention to write a text to a single community is out of place when compared with the intentions of other early Christian authors.

The central claim of *GAC* is "that the Gospels were written for general *circulation* around the churches and so envisaged a very general Christian audience."² Bauckham points out that "the evidence we have shows that Christian literature did in fact circulate around the churches very rapidly," which is a point I will strengthen in chapter three.³ He goes on to say, "Some evidence shows the

1 Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

2 Richard Bauckham, "Introduction," in Bauckham, *The Gospels for All Christians*, italics added.

3 Bauckham, "Introduction," 3.

deliberate launching of literature produced in one major church into general circulation around other churches.”⁴ We will find below that Bauckham and other *GAC* contributors decidedly limit the evidence of what counts as literature produced for general circulation to other churches. They will go on to argue, and Bauckham had already noted prior to the claim above, that gospels are not letters and cannot be interpreted like letters.⁵ Thus, letters are marginalized for what they might say about *circulation* because it is wrong to *interpret* gospels in the same manner. But, this is to confuse two different things. In fact, we know, as Bauckham himself acknowledges, that early Christian literature circulated around the churches, regardless of genre.⁶ This makes it all the more surprising that epistolary literature would be neglected to the extent that it is in *GAC*. I am putting epistolary literature in the discussion where it belongs, because epistolary literature has implications for the discussion of the *circulation* of texts.

Since we know that early Christians circulated their texts beyond their initial audiences, it is worth considering the expected audiences of early Christian literature in terms of geographic locales. Bauckham argues that Gospels were expected to circulate to “all Christians,” which means to multiple locales.⁷ Do other early Christian authors expect their texts to circulate to multiple locales? The Gospels do not state their expected audiences, but other texts do. What do those texts say about their various authors’ expectations of circulation? In considering these questions, I shift the focus on the elephant ten feet away rather than the fern-seed.⁸

The circulation of texts to multiple locales as expected by their authors and the circulation of texts beyond their initial audiences have implications for how scholars discuss early Christian communities. Bauckham says that the consensus he argues against viewed communities as “isolated” and

4 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 3.

5 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 2. See below, 6–7.

6 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 3.

7 Acts 2:9–11; 8:27–39 suggests at least the possibility that early Christianity was not limited to the territory of the Roman empire.

8 To adopt the phrase of C. S. Lewis, “Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism,” in *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 157. The point of the metaphor is, obviously, to focus on the large thing from at a distance rather than the myopic thing right in front of you. By viewing the Gospels alongside letters, we view the larger picture of early Christian authorial practices in order to suggest what is likely the case of evangelists. To use a different metaphor, rather than examining the shape and color of a particular piece of glass in a stained-glass window, we can step back and see the whole picture. Then, after viewing the whole picture, we might better understand how a particular piece fits.

“introverted.”⁹ Bauckham views communities, however, as a “network ... in constant close communication.”¹⁰ On the issue of the nature of early Christian communities, I am in complete agreement with the *GAC* contributors. I will argue that the circulation of letters to multiple locales and beyond their initial locales suggests that networks were in place to facilitate such circulation. Beyond this “networked” view of early Christian communities, I will argue that the notion of communities as theologically distinct is not supported by early Christian letters.

These three points discussed above—the expected circulation to multiple locales, the circulation of texts beyond their initial audiences, and the networks available for both instances of circulation—make up the main chapters below.

1 Chapter Summaries

The first chapter will highlight the extent to which epistolary literature has been neglected in *GAC* and subsequent debate. The reason for this neglect is because the contributors to *GAC* are primarily focused on interpretation, as we will see. This causes them to write off letters as contributing anything to the conversation. I argue, however, that social network theory offers two valuable insights for the inclusion of letters. The first is the idea that those who occupy similar positions in a social network (for my purposes the position is that of author) act similarly because of similar constraints put on them. Second, social networks provide the channels necessary for the flow of information or, for my purposes, texts. Determining the norms put in place by those in a position is the goal of the second and third chapters.

The second chapter asks the questions, what are the typical ways early Christian authors and, at the end of the chapter, ancient authors generally expected their texts to circulate? Thus, in the chapter, I primarily examine epistolary literature for what it reveals about respective expected audiences. As we will see in chapter one, there is an assumption by some scholars that Paul wrote letters for single locales.¹¹ I will demonstrate that this is a caricature of the evidence since Paul and other early Christians authors often wrote

9 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 2.

10 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 2.

11 See pp. 11–18 below where I critique the contributors to *GAC* for assuming that Paul’s letters were written for specific communities. See also, for example, Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, AB 27A (London: Doubleday, 2000), 27. Bonnie Thurston and Judith M. Ryan, *Philippians and Philemon*, SP 10 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), 27. For an example of

with the expectation that their texts would circulate to multiple locales. The observation that early Christian authors wrote with the expectation that their texts would circulate to multiple locales has implications for the *GAC* debate. If it is indeed the case that many early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales, we have reason to ask whether the evangelists would have expected their Gospels to circulate similarly to multiple locales.

In addition to discussing the authors' expectations of circulation, I will examine the actual practice of early Christians. This is the flip side of the coin from author's expectations. How do their recipients handle texts? This is a constraint forced upon the author, and likely would influence the author's own understanding of circulation. This is the subject of the third chapter. In this chapter, I examine the ways in which early Christians circulated both epistles and Gospels. It is obvious that early Christians circulated texts beyond their initial locales, but this has not been viewed in terms of its implications for the *GAC* debate. I show that early Christians did not view the generic distinction as a meaningful one insofar as it relates to the *circulation* of texts and, as such, it shows that epistolary literature is relevant to the debate. It also shows that even if an evangelist did intend his text for a specific community, it is unlikely his Gospel would have remained in that community, and in fact, we know the Gospels did not.

In the fourth chapter, I will use social network theory to underscore the degree to which early Christian communities were connected, and I will argue that those connections represent the most likely ways in which early Christians in general circulated their literature. First, I discuss the role of "network theory" in the *GAC* debate and illustrate its relevance to the debate. Then I show connections in the early Christian network, emphasizing especially those instances of connection that run between early Christian groups or other boundary markers, such as provincial networks. After this, I will illustrate the way we can see the individual social networks playing a role in the circulation of texts.

The conclusion will summarize the arguments presented and suggest ideas for carrying this research forward.

other Christian literature being composed for a single community, see Hans Dieter Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1995), 155.

Refocusing the Lenses

Richard Bauckham and the rest of the *GAC* contributors attempted to change the way we think about the audiences of the Gospels. This chapter will overview that contribution and show where their arguments need carried further. The first area in which they need taken a step further is that they have not made significant use of epistolary literature. This is because the primary interest of the *GAC* contributors was interpretation. Interpretation only tells part of the story. Circulation habits and practices add further evidence to the argument that Gospels were not written for specific communities. The second area is a clarification, namely clarifying Social Network Theory.

1 Interpretation vs. Circulation

The most influential chapter in *GAC* was Bauckham's.¹ It has generated the greatest amount of discussion.² Bauckham sets out his case against what I call the "isolated community model." The isolated community model holds that the Gospels (and really all early Christian literature) was written for distinct, theologically homogenous communities, such that the view of, in this case, a Gospel reflects the community's theology.³ As a result, Matthew writes his

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- 1 David C. Sim, "The Gospel for All Christians? A Response to Richard Bauckham" *JSNT* 84 (2001), 5.
 - 2 Philip F. Esler, "Community and Gospel in Early Christianity: A Response to Richard Bauckham's *Gospels for All Christians*," *SJT* 51/2 (1998): 235–48; Ernest van Eck, "A *Sitz* for the Gospel of Mark? A Critical Reaction to Bauckham's Theory on the Universality of the Gospels," *HTS* 56 (2000): 973–1008; Isak J. du Plessis, "The Lukan Audience—Rediscovered? Some Reactions to Bauckham's Theory," *Neot* 34 (2000): 243–62; Sim, "Gospel for All Christians?" 3–27; Margaret Mitchell, "Patristic Counter Evidence to the Claim that 'The Gospels Were Written for All Christians,'" *NTS* 51/1 (2005): 36–79; Richard Last, "Communities that Write: Christ-Groups, Associations, and Gospel Communities," *NTS* 58/2 (2012): 173–98.
 - 3 For discussion on this, and its limitations, see above all, Stanley Stowers, "The Concept of 'Community' and the History of Early Christianity," *MTR* 23/3 (2011): 238–56: "A community in this sense is a highly coherent social formation with commonality in thought and practice" (238).

Gospel for the Matthean community of which it is a product.⁴ He argues that many of the conditions that commentators view as unique to a given community were, in reality, common in many of the early Christian communities, and that these conditions are viewed as being localized only because scholars begin with the assumption that the Gospels were written for isolated communities.⁵ Significantly, he says that these assumptions have never been argued in print.⁶ After critiquing the standard assumption of scholars, Bauckham argues that early Christian communities were, in my terminology, open.⁷

The first stage of Bauckham's argument demonstrates the need to interpret the Gospels and Pauline epistles differently.⁸ He says those who hold to the isolated community model have "attempted to treat Gospels hermeneutically as though they were Pauline epistles."⁹ Next, Bauckham argues that the early Christian communities were not isolated, but were open communities, which were in "constant, close communication among themselves."¹⁰ He uses the travel habits of Peter and Paul found in Acts and the letter writing of Paul, Clement, and Ignatius to argue that the early Church was open.¹¹ The epistles of Paul are used to show how Paul "relates his churches to other churches (1 Cor. 1:2; 9:5; 16:3; 1 Thess. 2:4).¹² The letters of Clement and Ignatius (among

4 This is not to deny the obvious fact that Gospels had distinct beginnings in particular times and particular places and were undoubtedly used in the communities that produced them. The issue is the understanding of community and the understanding of circulation. Examples on the Matthean community and its relationship to the Gospel can be found in David C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998); Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2007), 56. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), 17–18. Matthias Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, trans. Kathleen Ess, BMSEC (Baylor: Baylor University Press, 2014), 355–67.

5 Bauckham, "For Whom Were the Gospels Written?" in Bauckham, *Gospels*, 24–26.

6 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 10.

7 That Bauckham views this position as standard comes from numerous references to a "consensus" (Bauckham, "For Whom?" 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 25, 26, 30, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48). Bauckham, "Introduction," 2, discusses the open nature of texts, following Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader* (London: Hutchinson, 1981), 8–10, this again is explicitly said to have *hermeneutical* implications. I use "open communities" following Malcolm Ross, "Diagnosing Prehistoric Language Contact," in *Motives for Language Change*, ed. Raymond Hickey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 179–92. This moves the discussion to the nature of group interaction, especially in terms of connectedness.

8 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 26.

9 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 26.

10 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 30.

11 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 32–42.

12 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 32.

others) are used to show connections.¹³ Bauckham concludes his chapter with six *hermeneutical* observations, all of which deal with shifting the current paradigm of *interpretation* to the open community model.¹⁴

Burridge's and Watson's chapters and Bauckham's second chapter in the volume are all primarily focused on interpretation.¹⁵ Burridge says that "genre is crucial for the *interpretation* of any text, including the question of its intended audience or readership."¹⁶ Watson's chapter traces the developments of various interpretive strategies.¹⁷ Bauckham's second chapter seeks to make sense of the Gospel of John as a text to be understood by those already familiar with Mark.¹⁸ All of this overt focus on interpretation makes sense in light of the intentions of the volume to challenge the usefulness of "Gospel communities" in interpreting the Gospels.

In the aftermath of *GAC*, critics of the volume sought to challenge on *interpretive* grounds, so Esler, Sim, Mitchell, and at least initially, Last. Esler sought to uphold social scientific readings citing their various merits.¹⁹ Bauckham responded to Esler in the same journal volume also discussing social scientific interpretations.²⁰ I will return to Burridge's response below because he makes several points inversely crucial to my argument. Mitchell argued that patristic interpretation was "very self consciously and complexly working at the fulcrum between the universality and particularity of the Gospels (including at times an insistence upon their original local audiences)."²¹ Bauckham responded to Mitchell's critique, challenging her claim that this was how the patristics interpreted the Gospels.²² Last initially challenged Bauckham and Burridge's critique against the consensus.²³ However, Last has recently argued, "The resilient notion of gospel authors sheltered within gospel communities

13 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 38.

14 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 44–48.

15 Burridge, "About People, by People, for People: Gospel Genre and Audiences," in Bauckham, *Gospels*, 113–45; Francis Watson, "Toward a Literal Reading of the Gospels," in Bauckham, *Gospels*, 195–217; Bauckham, "John for Readers of Mark," in Bauckham, *Gospels*, 149–71.

16 Burridge, "Gospel Genre and Audiences," 113, italics added.

17 Watson, "Literal," 195–217.

18 Bauckham, "John for Readers of Mark," 149–71.

19 Esler, "Community and Gospel," 235–48.

20 Bauckham, "A Response to Philip Esler," *SJT* 51/2 (1998): 249–53.

21 Mitchell, "Counter Evidence," 46, parentheses original.

22 Richard Bauckham, "Is There Patristic Counter-Evidence? A Response to Margaret Mitchell," in Edward Klink III ed., *The Audience of the Gospels*, LNTS 353 (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 68–110.

23 Last, "Communities that Write," 176.

is obsolete in light of recent developments in gospel research.”²⁴ Even among those who are supportive of the *GAC* position have primarily focused on interpretation.²⁵ I pass over all of these examples quickly not because they are unimportant, but to illustrate just how much of the focus of this debate has been on interpretation.

Many who previously held to the isolated community model have tried to find a middle ground between the open community model and the isolated community model. These scholars say that the Gospels were written in and for the evangelists’ respective communities, but that the evangelists thought that they might travel farther. Esler credits Bauckham for helping him come to such a conclusion.²⁶ Van Eck offers several thoughtful questions as to the possible origins of the Gospels in his response:

Was it impossible, for example, that a teacher of a specific community wrote down his gospel for his community, and that his written gospel then (like the letters of Paul) started to circulate in the early Christian movement to be used by more than one believing community? Was it not also possible that someone in a specific believing community could have written down what he heard, and that what was written down (a gospel) started to circulate as widely as Bauckham has suggested? Also is it not possible that some Gospels were written for individual communities, while others were indeed produced to be first and foremost read by a universal audience?²⁷

Isak J. du Plessis agrees with Bauckham that the Gospels are *about* Jesus, but du Plessis argues that Bauckham “does not take the first readers/audience seriously enough.”²⁸ He mentions several times that Bauckham’s theory cannot be applied to Luke because Luke addresses his audience at the beginning

24 Richard Last, “The Social Relationships of Gospel Writers: New Insights from Inscriptions Commending Greek Historiographers,” *JSNT* 37/3 (2015): 225. Similarly, Richard Last, “Historiographers and the Public Delivery of Gospel Literature” (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, San Antonio, TX, 21 November 2016).

25 Tobias Hägerland, “John’s Gospel: A Two-Level Drama?” *JSNT* 25/3 (2003): 309–22; Edward Klink III, *The Sheep of the Fold*, *SNTSMS* 41 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

26 Esler, “Community and Gospel,” 242.

27 Ernest van Eck, “A Sitz for the Gospel of Mark? A Critical Reaction to Bauckham’s Theory on the Universality of the Gospels,” *HTS* 56 (2000): 999.

28 Isak J. du Plessis, “The Lukan Audience—Rediscovered? Some Reactions to Bauckham’s Theory,” *Neot* 34 (2000): 248.

of his work (Lk 1:1).²⁹ The combination of original setting and later distribution is best summed up by Craig Blomberg:

The both/and approach of a majority of the most detailed and direct responses to *The Gospels for All Christians* seems amply justified. Bauckham and his fellow contributors have made a highly significant contribution to New Testament scholarship by successfully showing the probability that the evangelists could easily have envisioned their documents being quickly copied and rapidly transmitted for one church or community to another ... On the other hand, the volume stops well short of demonstrating that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John did *not* have focused audiences in mind as the first recipients of their Gospels.³⁰

According to Bauckham, however, such theories do not take his position seriously.³¹

Not all responses to *GAC* have been negative. It was well received in two early reviews by Paul Ellingworth and Barbara Bowe.³² The open community model has been applied to the Gospel of John in an article by Tobias Hägerland³³ and a monograph by Edward Klink III.³⁴ Scholars have begun to question the notion of Gospel communities as a result of *GAC*.³⁵ Scholars have also introduced non-canonical gospels into the discussion.³⁶ John Nolland's

29 Du Plessis, "The Lukan Audience—Rediscovered?" 244, 245, 247, 248, 259.

30 Craig L. Blomberg, "The Gospels for Specific Communities and All Christians," in Klink, *Audience*, 131, italics original.

31 Bauckham, "Response to Philip Esler," 249. Also, Edward W. Klink, "Conclusion: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity," in Klink, *Audience*, 161, "This is not the argument of *GAC*. When Bauckham is arguing about what the evangelists 'envisioned' for their audience, he is referring to the starting point; that is, he is envisioning a universal audience from the start."

32 Paul Ellingworth, review of *The Gospels for All Christians*, ed. by Richard Bauckham, *EvQ* 71 (1999): 273–5; Barbara E. Bowe, review of *The Gospels for All Christians*, ed. by Richard Bauckham, *CTM* 27 (2000): 295.

33 Tobias Hägerland, "John's Gospel: A Two-Level Drama?" *JSNT* 25/3 (2003): 309–22.

34 Edward Klink III, *The Sheep of the Fold*, *SNTSMS* 41 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

35 Michael F. Bird, "The Markan Community, Myth or Maze? Bauckham's *The Gospel for All Christians* Revisted," *JTS* 57/2 (2006): 474–86; Samuel Byrskog, "A Century with the *Sitz im Leben*: From Form-Critical Setting to Gospel Community and Beyond," *ZNW* 98/1–2 (2007): 1–27; Hugo Mendéz, "Did the Johannine Community Exist," *JSNT* 43/3 (2020): 350–74.

36 Thomas Kazen, "Sectarian Gospels for Some Christians? Intention and Mirror Reading in the Light of Extra-Canonical Texts," *NTS* 51/4 (2005): 561–78; Michael F. Bird, "Sectarian Gospels for Sectarian Christians? The Non-Canonical Gospels and Bauckham's *The Gospels for All Christians*," in Klink, *Audience*, 27–48.

commentary on Matthew envisions a wide readership based on *GAC*.³⁷ Craig Keener adopts the “both/and” approach in his commentary on John.³⁸ Even those who disagree with the conclusions of *GAC* have engaged with it in their commentaries.³⁹ Twelve years after *GAC*, Klink edited a volume to review the state of the *GAC* debate.⁴⁰ Thus far, however, the known, later circulation of Gospels beyond their initial locales has not played a significant role in the discussion, beyond its original discussion in *GAC*. Further, epistolary literature has been marginalized in the discussion, especially by *GAC* proponents. One could understand why they have marginalized this literature, especially Paul’s letters, because Pauline scholars have, like gospel scholars, assumed that an apparent distinct ideology entailed an isolated community. Sim’s response to Bauckham is illustrative on this point.

2 What About the Epistles?

Sim raises several important objections in his response to Bauckham that will come up below. Sim questions the usefulness of genre in determining audiences.⁴¹ Sim also notes the differences in social class between other classical biographers (elite) and the Gospel writers (non-elite), Sim says that it is “unclear just what can be deduced from [the evangelists’] adoption and adaptation of this particular genre.”⁴² We will return to this objection when we return to Social Network Theory in chapter three.⁴³ He also brings the Pauline epistles into the discussion:

Let us consider the testimony of the Pauline epistles. The letters of Paul clearly attest to the great mobility and communication within the churches Paul established in Greece and Asia Minor in the 50s. These churches were a hive of activity with Paul and his co-workers constantly traveling from one church to another or maintaining contact by

37 John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), see especially p. 18 n.14. Nolland believes that Matthew had, to use Burridge’s phrase, a “market niche” for his Gospel.

38 Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 140.

39 E.g. Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, vol. 1: *Introduction, Analysis and Reference*, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 116 n.90; Marcus, *Mark* 1–8, 25–30.

40 Klink, ed., *The Audience of the Gospels*.

41 Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians?” 18.

42 Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians?” 18.

43 We will return to this objection below p. 96.

letter. But should we transfer this particular situation to the remainder of the Christian world? The evidence suggests that we should not. Once again the major issue here is the division within the ranks of the early Christians.⁴⁴

I will argue that Sim is wrong about why we should not “transfer” the situation of the Pauline communities to other early Christian communities in chapter two. I will only note here that several early Christian letters reveal conflicts within the same communities, which ought to be a clue that the travel habits of Paul and his associates are transferable. About the conflict in Paul’s letters and what it reveals about the connections in early Christianity, Sim says,

It is well known that in the initial decades the early Christians were divided into at least two distinct and very different groups that were often in conflict with one another ... So intense were these disagreements and divisions within the ranks of the Christians that it is perhaps more appropriate to speak of very different Christian movements rather than a single movement.⁴⁵

Again, I will return to this objection in chapter two, but it is significant that Sim sees these disagreements as a matter of division rather than connection.⁴⁶ I highlight it here to bring it to the readers’ attention. Sim uses the evidence of Paul’s letters to point to “divided” groups that are “distinct” and “very different.” He emphasizes these distinctions and differences so much that he says it is “perhaps more appropriate to speak of very different Christian movements rather than a single movement.”⁴⁷ Of course there were distinct and different Christian communities or I think better, Christian expressions of the gospel and those who advocated for such expressions, but there is an assumption at work here that leads Sim and, as we will see below, others to view Christian communities as separate because of the distinctions.

The focus on interpretation explains the lack of discussion on epistolary literature. Several *GAC* contributors explicitly contrasted the interpretation of letters and gospels. Bauckham raises the generic distinction between letters, and Paul’s letters in particular, and the Gospels in the introduction.⁴⁸

44 Sim, “The Gospel for All Christians?” 11.

45 Sim, “The Gospel for All Christians?” 10.

46 See pp. 34–6.

47 Sim, “The Gospel for All Christians?” 10.

48 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 1.

The importance of interpretation can be seen when Bauckham says, "What the consensus I am attacking has in effect done is to attempt to treat the Gospels *hermeneutically* as though they were Pauline epistles."⁴⁹ He goes on to say, "Scholars have sought to see the audience and therefore also the message of the Gospels in just as local and particularized terms as those of the major Pauline letters, which certainly are addressed to specific Christian communities and envisage the specific needs and problems of those communities."⁵⁰ Bauckham then concludes, "Gospels are not letters."⁵¹ And while it is quite evidently true that Gospels are not letters and, more importantly, should not be interpreted like letters, it is also true that Gospels and letters both circulated widely beyond their initial locales.

Bauckham goes on to argue that the issue of genre is significant in this discussion. He argues that "a special quality of the letter genre" is "that it enables a writer to address specified addressees in all the particularity of their circumstances."⁵² He says that other, non-Corinthians, who have read 1 Corinthians, have "to some extent ... felt obliged to imagine what the specifically Corinthian Paul addressed was."⁵³ He goes on to say that no one "from the second century to the mid-twentieth century ... ever supposed that the specific situation of the Matthean community was relevant to reading the Gospel of Matthew."⁵⁴ Again, it bears repeating that I agree with Bauckham about the usefulness (or lack thereof) of communities when it comes to reading the Gospels. Here, however, he glosses over a significant point, namely that Gospels and letters circulated similarly. He acknowledges that people outside of Corinth "fairly soon" read 1 Corinthians.⁵⁵ It is implicit that others also "fairly soon" read Matthew outside of the locale in which Matthew was written, but they did not read it through the lens of the Matthean community. Here we have a clear example that, while Bauckham is correct to see the generic distinction is important insofar as it relates to interpretation, the generic distinction is marginalized when it comes to circulation. Early Christians circulated their texts similarly.

The Pauline epistles are seen as addressing only one community. When Bauckham says the "major Pauline letters" were "certainly addressed to specific Christian communities," we see that Bauckham thinks that Paul's letters

49 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 26, italics added.

50 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 26.

51 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 27.

52 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 27.

53 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 27.

54 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 28.

55 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 27.

are written to specific locales.⁵⁶ This is true. The places addressed in letters are specific, but by “specific locale,” Bauckham appears to mean “individual community.” This is the impression that Richard Burridge gives. Burridge provides a caveat to the view that Paul’s letters are written for individual communities (“whatever genre the Gospels may be, they are at least different from Pauline epistles [which are written *for the most part* to specific communities.]”),⁵⁷ but he continues to argue based on the assumption that epistles were addressed only to specific communities. We can see this assumption of single specific communities when Burridge discusses the circulation of the Pauline epistles, which he frames only in terms of their later circulation: “Paul’s letters, *which were written to specific communities*, seem to have been passed around to others to read aloud—and they were then preserved in collections for further reading.”⁵⁸ This does not take into account the circulation that Paul intended from the beginning in some of his epistles. Burridge is right, however, to cite later circulation as similar evidence to what happened to the Gospels, and this should have been a clue that letters have something to contribute to the case being made by *GAC* contributors. However, such statements ignore the various, multi-locale audiences addressed in the Pauline corpus in order to contrast the Gospels with a caricature. It would be better to consider the various addressees in Paul’s letters and see what they might reveal about possible expectations of Gospel circulation.

In addition to the Pauline corpus, the contributors to *GAC* mention the general epistles on occasion, but again, we see that their significance for what they could tell us about audience is at best underutilized, and at worst set aside as being of no consequence. Bauckham attempts to qualify his generic distinction between letters and gospels with a note: “Of course, the letter genre can be used to address a very wide audience in very general terms. It is a mistake to regard a circular letter such as 1 Peter as less genuinely a letter than Philemon. But the letter genre does enable particularity of address to specific readers to an extent that no other ancient literary genre does.”⁵⁹ For Bauckham, the fact that letters have addressees at all eliminates them from consideration of what they might tell us about possible audiences.⁶⁰ When Bauckham later appeals to the audience of 1 Peter, it is used only to show that the early Christian community was closely connected—that the church in Rome cared about what

56 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 26.

57 Burridge, “Gospel Genre and Audience,” 119, italics added.

58 Burridge, “Gospel Genre and Audience,” 141, italics added.

59 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 27 n. 30.

60 Bauckham, “Introduction,” 2.

has happening in Asia Minor.⁶¹ Bauckham is not wrong to point out this connection. However, as we will discuss in chapter two, the diversity exhibited in the provinces listed in 1 Peter are similar to the diversity that would have been faced by the Gospels as they circulated.⁶² This makes Barton's claim that Graham Stanton's attempts to broaden the Matthean audience on the basis of 1 Peter (as well as Paul and Ignatius) are a "strategic retreat" all the more surprising.⁶³ Stanton is, or should be viewed as, an ally. He argues that genre implies a large audience, like Burridge, and for linked communities, like Thompson, through which Matthew circulated, like Alexander.⁶⁴ The use of 1 Peter, then, is not a strategic retreat; it is an example of what the Gospels would have faced. There is no mention of James' audience in *GAC*, though James seems to have similarly expected a broad audience (James 1:1). Like the Pauline epistles, the general epistles play no part in their argument in supplying evidence that the evangelists might have expected their Gospels to reach a broad audience.

This is, of course, a smaller audience than what Bauckham envisages. He considers that the evangelists wrote with the expectation that their gospels could reach "all Christians." With these examples (Pauline letters or 1 Peter), I cannot get to Bauckham's "all Christian" audience. What these multi-locale audiences do show, however, is that early Christian authors did expect their texts to be read in multiple locales. Early Christian authors might have thought the circumstances of those communities were "fairly widespread ... without supposing [their letters] would therefore have no appeal or use in churches lacking some of these features."⁶⁵ If we consider 2 Corinthians or Colossians (to be discussed in chapter two), Paul might have expected similar circumstances in those neighboring communities that are addressed or to which the letter is expected to circulate, but that does not mean that his letters would have no appeal to those other churches should the specific circumstances not have been present.⁶⁶ More significant, however, are those addressees that show that authors do expect (or might possibly indicate) circulation to "all Christians" that are ignored in *GAC*.

61 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 38.

62 Pp. 47–8.

63 G. N. Stanton, "Revisiting Matthew's Communities," *SBL 1994 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars, 1994), 11; Stephen C. Barton, "Can We Identify the Gospel Audiences?" in Bauckham, *Gospels*, 182.

64 Stanton, "Revisiting Matthew's Communities," 11–12.

65 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 24.

66 Pp. 37–41.

Perhaps the clearest example of neglecting epistolary literature for what it might say about the circulation of the Gospels can be seen when Bauckham acknowledges that the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* “was intended also to circulate to other churches.”⁶⁷ Beyond the church at Philomelium, the letter is addressed to “the communities of the holy and catholic church sojourning in every place” (Mart. Pol. Inscript.). However, Bauckham does not use this as evidence of the kind of circulation he envisions. Rather, he discusses the links that the exchange of letters implies.⁶⁸ Once more, while he is not wrong to focus on the links that the sending of letters creates—I will also make this point. However, to ignore a genuinely catholic audience, when it is precisely what he is arguing for, hurts his case. Clearly early Christians did expect some of their *letters* to be read by “all Christians.”

There is one final piece of evidence to consider concerning epistolary literature: the epistles of John have been neglected by *GAC* proponents. In *GAC*, 2–3 John are used only to show the existence of traveling teachers.⁶⁹ Burridge claims that there is no external evidence for Gospel communities,⁷⁰ yet 1–3 John appear *prima facie* to be evidence for, at least, one such community. In addition to the marginalization of 1–3 John in *GAC*, they have been marginalized in the subsequent debate. Edward Klink III avoids them in his application of the principles of *GAC* to the Fourth Gospel [FG] by saying, “Several of the most important reconstructions of [the Johannine community] derive their reconstruction from the Gospel alone.”⁷¹ Hägerland does concede that “there may be some features in the Epistles of John that point to the existence of a specific community in which the Gospel as well as the Epistles originated.”⁷² However, he goes on to say, “With Martin Hengel I am inclined to judge common authorship as a more plausible solution to the ‘Johannine question,’ once allegorical reading of the Gospel has been found unwarranted.”⁷³ Here, Hägerland answers the question about common audience by appealing to common authorship, though these are two different things. The problem with those in favor of *GAC* ignoring the Johannine epistles is perhaps seen most glaringly in Bauckham’s work. Johannine scholars have long believed that FG and 1–3 John originated from, and were written to, the Johannine community,

67 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 38.

68 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 38.

69 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 36.

70 Burridge, “Gospel Genre and Audience,” 133.

71 Klink, *Sheep*, 39.

72 Hägerland, “John’s Gospel,” 322.

73 Hägerland, “John’s Gospel,” 322.

as we will see below. Bauckham knows this.⁷⁴ He acknowledges that he must deal with the Johannine community in particular, because Johannine scholars have argued that the Johannine community is isolated *and* because “there are Johannine letters to complement the evidence of the Gospel.”⁷⁵ In spite of this acknowledgment that the letters complement the Gospel, the Johannine letters are not discussed in his response to Johannine scholars unconvinced by his reading strategy presented in *GAC*.⁷⁶ Much Johannine scholarship has not drawn the same conclusion as *GAC* contributors that the letter genre necessitates a certain expectation about the geographic locale of the expected audience, which heightens our perception of the omission of the Johannine letters.⁷⁷

Johannine scholars have viewed FG and the Johannine epistles as circulating to similar and sometimes the same geographic locales. This can be seen in at least two groups: those who argue that the Gospel and letters circulated to “all Christians” and those who believe the Gospel and letters were written for a specific community.

The idea that the Gospel and letters of John were written to circulate to a vast, geographically diverse audience has long fallen out of favor. However, a little more than a century ago, several scholars held this position. Although there are various answers to how the Gospel and letters, especially 1 John, are related, there was agreement that the texts were expected to be circulated widely.⁷⁸ Schmiedel said that “a whole number of persons of like mind who were filled with a feeling of veneration for John the Elder, once head of this community, and at the same time were anxious, by writing books, to make their ideas current in the Church.”⁷⁹ There are a number of significant aspects to Schmiedel’s claim. First, it appears, according to Schmiedel, that

74 Richard Bauckham, *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 113.

75 Bauckham, *Testimony*, 115.

76 The failure to discuss the Johannine letters in the course of the *GAC* debate has led some Johannine scholars to reject Bauckham’s thesis. So, Judith M. Lieu, “The Audience of the Johannine Epistles,” in *Communities in Dispute: Current Scholarship on the Johannine Epistles*, eds. R. Alan Culpepper and Paul N. Anderson, ECL 13 (Atlanta, SBL Press, 2014), 123. Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John: Introduction Analysis and Reference*, vol. 1, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 116 n.90, also explicitly objects to Bauckham’s view on the basis of the letters.

77 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 27 n.30.

78 Adolf Jülicher, *Einleitung in das neue Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1901), 191, 197, 335; Paul W. Schmiedel, *The Johannine Writings*, trans. Maurice A. Canney (London: Black, 1908), 211, 212, 217; Benjamin Wisner Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1910), 188.

79 Schmiedel, *The Johannine Writings*, 217.

these “books” came from a distinct early Christian community, namely John the Elder’s community. Second, though these “books” originated in a distinct early Christian community, they were not intended solely for that community. Third, and finally, the term “books” was used not only of FG but of 1–3 John as well.⁸⁰ These Johannine scholars assumed that these texts were meant to be circulated to the “Church” generally. The generic distinction between the Gospel and letters is not noted by these scholars in terms of making any distinction concerning circulation to specific locales. Though the view that the Gospels and epistles were written for all Christians is typical of older scholarship, a few, more recent scholars have defended this position. Martin Hengel and Thomas Brodie are two of its supporters.⁸¹ Hengel succinctly says, “The Gospel and letters are addressed to all Christian communities.”⁸² Brodie says, “Obviously the Johannine writings constitute a distinct grouping within the NT. But distinctness does not demand literary independence, still less, physical separation (separateness of community).”⁸³

That FG was circulated among a small, local group of followers is not a recent idea. Lightfoot took this position in 1898.⁸⁴ He also assumed that 1 John was intended to circulate with the Gospel to this “immediate circle of hearers.”⁸⁵ Moving to a more recent period, the assumption that the Gospels and letters were written to a local community or a specific collection of local communities continues. It can be found in Wengst’s, Thompson’s, Johnson’s, Painter’s, Lieu’s, and Jobes’s commentaries on the Johannine epistles, Delebecque’s, Manns’s, Maloney’s, and Beutler’s commentaries on FG, Köstenberger’s survey on the Gospel of John, and several articles and monographs.⁸⁶

80 Schmiedel, *The Johannine Writings*, 216–7.

81 Martin Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1989), 106; Thomas L. Brodie, *The Quest for the Origin of John’s Gospel: A Source Oriented Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 148.

82 Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 105–6.

83 Brody, *Quest*, 148.

84 J. B. Lightfoot, “Internal Evidence of the Authenticity and Genuineness of St. John’s Gospel,” in *Biblical Essays*, 2nd. ed. (London: Macmillan, 1904), 197.

85 Lightfoot, “Internal Evidence,” 197.

86 Klaus Wengst, *Der erste, zweite und dritte Briefe des Johannes*, ÖTK 16 (Gütterlosh: Gütterlosher Verlagshaus, 1978), 25; Marianne Meyer Thompson, *1–3 John*, IVPNTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 21; Thomas F. Johnson, *1, 2, and 3 John*, NIBCNT (Peabody, MA; Hendrickson, 1993), 4; John Painter, *1, 2, and 3 John*, SP 18 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002), 23–4; Judith M. Lieu, *I, II, and III John*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 17, 18; Karen H. Jobes, *1, 2, and 3 John*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 25. Édouard Delebecque, *Évangile de Jean*, CahRB 23 (Paris: Gabalda, 1987), 14; Frédéric Manns, *L’Évangile de Jean à la lumière du Judaïsme*, SBFA 33

These Johannine scholars do not view the generic differences between the Gospel and letters as making a claim about circulation. It is not that Gospels circulate widely and letters to specific communities or *vice versa*. In fact, they say the opposite. They assume they circulate similarly. It might be objected that it is reasonable to assume the Johannine letters circulated to similar locales as FG, but not that other early Christian epistolary literature circulated to geographically diverse or restricted locales similar to the Gospels, because of the obvious similarities between the Johannine literature and the lack of similarities between the other Christian epistolary literature and the Gospels.

Although it is neither common nor popular, circulation to similar locales has been argued for the Gospel of Mark and the Petrine epistles, especially 1 Peter, in a manner similar to the Johannine literature. Bacon argues explicitly not just that there is an “association” between Mark and 1 Peter, but that 1 Peter was an “epistle of commendation intended to accompany the Gospel of Mark.”⁸⁷ It follows that, if 1 Peter was an epistle of commendation, the Gospel and epistle circulated to the same locales. Further, Schattenmann has argued that 1 Peter serves as a commentary to Mark 13.⁸⁸ While I grant that viewing 1 Peter and the Gospel of Mark as circulating to similar locales has not been viewed as favorably in recent New Testament scholarship as circulation of FG and 1–3 John to similar locales, it is important to note that some scholars view it as possible. Johannine scholars are not the only ones who have relativized the generic distinction in terms of circulation. The circulation of early Christian letters, then, can provide insight to the circulation of Gospels.

(Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1991), 10; Francis J. Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, SP 4 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 4; Johannes Beutler, *Das Johannesevangelium* (Freiburg: Herder, 2013), 65–8. Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John: The Gospel in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective*, EBS (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 203. Wayne A. Meeks, “The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism,” *JBL* 91/1 (1972): 71; D. Moody Smith, *Johannine Christianity: Essays on its Setting, Sources, and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1984), 9–22; John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature, and Theology of the Johannine Community*, 2nd. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 33; John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 29; Urban C. von Wahlde, “Raymond Brown’s View of the Crisis of 1 John: In the Light of Some Peculiar Features of the Johannine Gospel” in Culpepper and Anderson, *Communities*, 19–45; Paul N. Anderson, “The Community that Raymond Brown Left Behind: Reflections on the Johannine Dialectical Situation,” in Culpepper and Anderson, *Communities*, 47–93; R. Alan Culpepper, “The Relationship between the Gospel of John and 1 John,” in Culpepper and Anderson, *Communities*, 95–119.

87 Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel*, 185.

88 Johannes Schattenmann, “The Little Apocalypse of the Synoptics and the First Epistle of Peter,” *ThTo* 11/2 (1954): 196.

3 Correcting the Vision

3.1 Social Network Theory

Social network theory is the overarching method that runs through this study. It lies behind the second and third chapters. At times, I will allude to social network terms in these chapters, but the description of social networks becomes explicit in the fourth chapter. This methodology was introduced to early Christian and New Testament studies in Michael White's edited *Semeia* volume, *Social Networks in the Early Christian Environment: Issues and Methods for Social History*.⁸⁹ Several of the articles in that volume focused on the social relationships of individuals.⁹⁰ While these studies are illuminating, and indeed such studies are still a part of social network analysis, there are other aspects of social network theory that focus on "similarities, ... interactions, and flows," along with social relationships.⁹¹ Although in some sense these categories may influence one another, I am interested in the final aspect, namely "flows."⁹² Flows "are relations based on exchanges or transfer between nodes."⁹³ Nodes are the various members of a given network. They can be made up of persons, groups, or neighborhoods, depending on how large the overall network is envisaged. All manner of things may flow, including goods, resources, or information, and all of these may be said to flow between nodes.⁹⁴ Since the flow (or circulation) of the Gospels is the main contention of *GAC*, and the flow (or circulation) of epistles is to be examined below, social network theory can offer valuable insight.

89 L. Michael White, ed., *Social Networks in the Early Christian Environment: Issues and Methods for Social History*, *Semeia* 56 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature Press, 1992).

90 L. Michael White, "Finding the Ties that Bind: Issues from Social Description," in White, *Social Networks*, 3–22; Holland Hendrix, "Benefactor/Patron Networks in the Urban Environment: Evidence from Thessalonica," in White, *Social Networks*, 39–58; Elizabeth A. Clark, "Elite Networks and Heresy Accusations: Towards a Social Description of the Origenist Controversy," in White, *Social Networks*, 79–117; Robert F. Stoops Jr., "Christ as Patron in the Acts of Peter," in White, *Social Networks*, 143–58.

91 Alexandra Marin and Barry Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," in *The Sage Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, ed. John Scott and Peter J. Carrington (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2011), 12.

92 On the way in which similarities, social relations, interactions and flows influence one another see, for example, the studies of White, "Finding the Ties that Bind," 3–22, and Clark, "Elite Networks," 79–117, to see how social relations, that is who a member of a network is connected to and how they are connected (i.e. family, friend, political ally, etc), affect interactions, that is behavior, between members of the network.

93 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 12.

94 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 12.

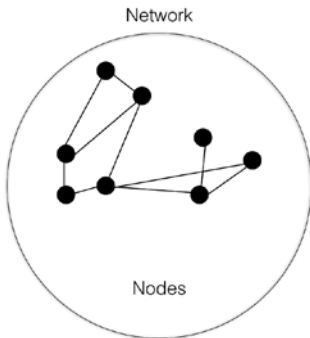


FIGURE 1 Nodes

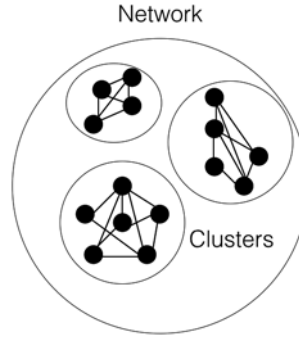


FIGURE 2 Clusters

Social network theory “takes as its starting point the premise that social life is created primarily and most importantly by relations and the patterns formed by these relations.”⁹⁵ It seeks to illuminate the connections between the nodes (see Figure 1).⁹⁶

These nodes can be further divided into “clusters” within the overall network, where connections between nodes are seen to be denser than between other nodes in the network (see Figure 2).⁹⁷

When these nodes or clusters are shown to be connected, one can examine a number of aspects about their relationship, including, as I mentioned above, flows. For my purposes, this will be the exchange or transfer of texts.

Social network theory makes two key assumptions for my argument. First, it does not “assume environments, attributes, or circumstances affect actors independently.”⁹⁸ Stated in positive terms, environments, attributes, or circumstances have “ramifications” for the network.⁹⁹ Second, social network theory does not “assume the existence of uniformly cohesive and discretely bounded groups.”¹⁰⁰

The first assumption is primarily the focus of this study. Concerning the first assumption, scholars, especially since the rise of redaction criticism, have emphasized the agency of the individual evangelists in shaping their

95 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 11.

96 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 11.

97 L. Michael White, “Social Networks: Theoretical Orientation and Historical Applications,” in White, *Social Networks*, 28.

98 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 12.

99 J. Clyde Mitchell, “Social Networks,” *ARA* 3 (1974): 280.

100 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 12–13.

Gospels for their communities.¹⁰¹ What scholars have failed to take seriously is that the evangelists were only a few out of the many early Christian authors. These other early Christian authors might have influenced them. Marin and Wellman say:

People with similar attributes [for my purposes, the ability to author a text] frequently have similar social network positions. Their similar outcomes are caused by the constraints, opportunities and perceptions created by these similar network positions. *By studying behavior as embedded in social networks, social scientists are able to explain macro-level patterns not simply as a large number of people acting similarly because they are similar, but as a large number of people acting on one another to shape one another's actions in ways that create particular outcomes.*¹⁰²

I will discuss the “position” of an ancient author and why it is likely that they expected their literature to circulate to multiple locales in greater detail in the following chapter after discussing why epistolary literature and epistolary authors should be included in a discussion about evangelists’ expectations. The third chapter will demonstrate that many early Christian authors expected that their work would circulate to multiple locales. This circulation suggests common or typical practice. This, of course, does not negate the fact that some people might act outside of what was typical, but this would make their actions *atypical*.

The second assumption mentioned above runs afoul of the consensus understanding of early Christian communities, which, as we saw above, tends to view communities as “uniformly cohesive and discretely bounded groups.”¹⁰³ Social network theorists would call the division of Christian groups one from another, and especially the evangelists and their communities from other evangelist’s communities, “too easy an oversimplification.”¹⁰⁴ New Testament scholars who are inclined to view “community” as implying a totalizing of the

101 See for example, Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, trans. James Boyce, Donald Juel, and William Poehlmann (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969); Günther Bornkamm, “End-Expectation and Church in Matthew,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, NTL (London: SCM, 1963), 15–38.

102 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 13, italics added.

103 See for example Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist, 1979), 59–91, spends a chapter distinguishing the various groups in FG. J. Andrew Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990). France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 18, calls Matthew's community “distinct.”

104 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 13.

members' identities have "[made] invisible the importance of differing levels of group membership, membership in multiple groups and crosscutting ties between groups."¹⁰⁵ In other words, they have ignored the complex social realities that make up the lives of people. As Marin and Wellman put it,

Studying group membership as having a uniform influence on members only makes sense if membership itself is uniform: if every group member shares the same relation to the group. This is rarely the case. Even when something that would be recognized as a 'group' exists, some members are more or less committed, more or less tied to other group members, more or less identified with the group or more or less recognized by others as co-members of the group.¹⁰⁶

To ignore the reality of these variables is to ignore "the basis of social structure."¹⁰⁷ Applied to my argument, studies that argue that the events narrated in the Gospels apply to the Gospel community en masse ignore the reality of varying allegiances of Christians within their communities.¹⁰⁸

In defining early Christian clusters we run into a problem, particularly if we think of these clusters in the terms typically applied to the earliest Christian groups: Gentile Christianity, Jewish Christianity, and Johannine Christianity.¹⁰⁹ The division of "Gentile" and "Jewish" Christianity is seemingly taken from Luke and Paul, namely "those of the circumcision" and "the Gentiles"

105 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 13.

106 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 13.

107 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 14.

108 For such an understanding of community see, for example, Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 162–3. See also the example of Esler, "Community and Gospel," 243, in which Matthew either supports or critiques his community. That is, Esler thinks that the *whole* community is engaged in a practice that Matthew must either critique or affirm, as if this is a binary choice.

109 See for example the consecutive chapters in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, eds. Margaret Mitchell and Frances M. Young, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): "Jewish Christianity" (Joel Marcus, 87–102); "Gentile Christianity" (Margaret M. Mitchell, 103–24); "Johannine Christianity" (Harold W. Attridge, 125–44). Raymond E. Brown, "Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity," *CBQ* 45/1 (1983): 74–9, has suggested that the simple divisions between Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity do not go far enough, arguing instead for four types of Jewish Christianity with their gentile converts and one of those types are "properly" called Hellenistic (77–8). For my purposes, however, the above distinctions, "Jewish," "Pauline," and "Johannine," will suffice, since clusters can be made based on many factors and the above distinctions are those with which scholars most often divide early Christianity.

(Acts 10:45; 11:2–3; Gal. 2:12). These categories, though clear from the authors of the text of the New Testament, come with some complicating factors.¹¹⁰ The first of these is that Paul, who was the leader of the Gentile Christian movement and calls himself “the apostle to the Gentiles” (Gal. 2:8; Rom. 11:13), is a Jew and, as we will see, worked with a number of Jews in his Gentile mission. Acts 11:2 further illustrates the problem. “Those from the circumcision” took issue with Peter, who was circumcised, because he associated with Gentiles. This is further seen in Gal. 2:11, and is the problem articulated in Gal. 2:14. Conversely, at least in Galatia, it appears that some Gentile Christians might have been or were very near to becoming circumcised and living “Jewishly” (Gal. 5:1–6). If there were Gentile Christians who were circumcised and lived Jewishly, would they be placed in the Jewish Christian group? What the terms do, though, is allow scholars to see the clusters within Christianity, however blurred the lines distinguishing them might have been and however freely individuals could move between them.¹¹¹ It is important to note, now, and I will bring this point up again in chapter five, that where these distinctions are blurred most likely indicates “bridging”—an actor or group that acts as a link between other actors or groups, thus connecting the two individuals or groups that are otherwise unconnected (see Figure 3).

A further assumption of social network theory is that “people tend to be *homophilous*, meaning that they have stronger ties with people who are similar to themselves.”¹¹² This will have implications for the circulation of texts,¹¹³ but for the moment it helps explain the rise of early Christian clusters. For example, it makes sense of the rise of Greek-speaking Jewish Christians, or “Hellenists,” and the Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians, or “Aramaists”

110 Identifying groups based on the internal examination of texts, while helpful does come with the limitations listed in what follows above. See also, Robert A. Kraft, “The Weighing of the Parts: Pivots and Pitfalls in the Study of Early Judaism and their Early Christian Offspring,” in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, eds., Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 89–90.

111 One might expect that it was easier for a Jewish person to live like a Gentile than a Gentile to live like a Jew. Living like a Jew probably, though perhaps not necessarily, included circumcision. Philo and the author of the Odes of Solomon talk about a spiritual circumcision (Odes Sol. 1–4; Philo, *Dreams*, 2.25; *QG*, 3.46, 48). This leaves the role of physical circumcision ambiguous. See also the markers mentioned differentiating and confusing early Christianity in Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

112 Stephen P. Borgatti and Virginie Lopez Kidwell, “Network Theory,” in Scott and Carrington, *Handbook of Social Network Analysis*, 41, italics original.

113 Cf. Loveday Alexander, “Ancient Book Production and the Circulation of the Gospels,” in *Gospels*, 104.

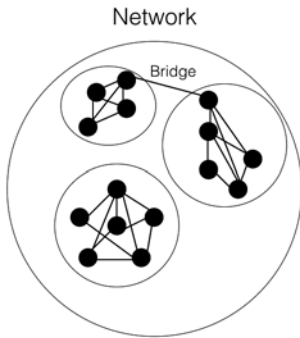


FIGURE 3
Bridges

(Acts 6:1), whose commonalities are clearly seen in their respective languages. However, where a bridge existed, the potential existed for novelty.¹¹⁴ That is, new ideas or, again, for my purposes, texts, could be introduced from those outside of a given cluster.¹¹⁵

Social network theory, then, adds a necessary corrective—that the early Christians were connected—to the consensus understanding of community, and I will argue below that these connections likely facilitated the circulation of early Christian literature. It also helps explain why authors might reasonably be expected to have similar expectations of audience—because they shaped one another’s actions—but it does not necessitate that they acted similarly. In this sense, we might include epistolary literature in the *GAC* discussion. In the following section, I will show the points on which I differ with the *GAC* contributors, and how their argument can be strengthened by the inclusion of epistolary literature.

As I noted in the above, social network theory does not assume that environments and circumstances affect actors independently. It is worth quoting Marin and Wellman again to remind ourselves why this is the case:

Their similar outcomes are caused by the constraints, opportunities and perceptions created by these similar network positions. By studying behavior as embedded in social networks, social scientists are able to explain macro-level patterns not simply as a large number of people acting similarly because they are similar, but as a large number of people acting on one another to shape one another’s actions in ways that create particular outcomes.¹¹⁶

114 Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell, “Network Theory,” 41.

115 Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell, “Network Theory,” 41.

116 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 13.

A “position” is a location in a given social structure, and positions come with corresponding roles. “Roles” are the set of behaviors corresponding to a given position, and these roles lead to various outcomes.¹¹⁷ Members of a network hold various positions. For example, a small network such as a family might have the positions “parents” and “children,” or a larger network such as a company might have “board of directors,” “managers,” and “employees” as positions.¹¹⁸ Nisbet says, “We find [positions] waiting for us.”¹¹⁹ The process of socialization is learning how to fit into the positions that we find ourselves as we grow by acting correctly.¹²⁰ These “correct” or (better) “normal” or “typical” actions are the roles that correspond to any given position.

Expectations for how one acts in his or her position, one’s role, come from “norms.”¹²¹ “All human behavior is normatively directed,” according to Nisbet.¹²² Norms are “evaluative points of reference by which we assess ourselves.”¹²³ This process of assessing ourselves is called the mutual steering process.¹²⁴ It is mutual because it is considered from two perspectives: 1) how we perceive our actions as measured against the norm, and 2) how we think others will perceive our actions as measured against the norm.¹²⁵ The result of this mutual steering process is the (general) maintenance of role norms.¹²⁶ Thus, those who act according to what is expected of them and whom others perceive to be acting appropriately act “normally” (i.e. according to the norm) or “typically.”¹²⁷ Assuming the individual acts “typically,” he or she confirms the expected actions, and thus “reinforces” them for others.¹²⁸ If, however, a person “deviates” from expected actions and it is recognized as deviant

117 Anuska Ferligoj, Patrick Doreian, and Vladimir Batagelj, “Positions and Roles,” in Scott and Carrington, *Social Network Analysis*, 434.

118 Ferligoj, Doreian, and Batagelj, “Positions and Roles,” 434.

119 Robert A. Nisbet, *The Social Bond: An Introduction to the Study of Society* (New York: Knopf, 1970), 148, 149.

120 Nisbet, *The Social Bond*, 149.

121 Nisbet, *The Social Bond*, 150.

122 Nisbet, *The Social Bond*, 222.

123 Nisbet, *The Social Bond*, 150.

124 S. F. Nadel, *The Theory of Social Structure* (Glenco, IL: The Free Press, 1957), 51.

125 Nadel, *Social Structure*, 51.

126 Nadel, *Social Structure*, 51. I include the word “general” because as we will see below roles do shift. Nevertheless, the overall job of the mutual steering process is to reinforce norms.

127 The language of “typical” comes from Nadel, *Social Structure*, 45. As Nadel discusses here, discussing “normal” or “typical” can be difficult if there is not a sufficient consensus. Nevertheless, he says, “general remarks can be made” (45). I prefer, and have used already, “typical” and will continue to use it below.

128 Nadel, *Social Structure*, 51. Similarly, Elliott McGinnies, *Social Behavior: A Functional Analysis* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), 102.

behavior, then others in his or her position can punish that individual.¹²⁹ For example, a dishonest businessman may find himself cut out of existing deals or find new deals difficult to obtain.¹³⁰ Punishment, again, serves to reinforce existing norms.¹³¹ Returning to our businessman example, the punishment inflicted reinforces that there are certain expectations about how a business person should act. If a person deviates from expectations and it is not recognized as deviation by others, then we find that the expectation has shifted to include this (formerly) deviant behavior. This leads to role change.¹³² That is, the actions associated with the position have changed. Thus, we see that those in a position engaged in an action “must implicate others.”¹³³ Understanding norms, then, can help us understand behavior in terms of individuals acting on one another to produce certain outcomes.¹³⁴

A number of studies have used social network theory to show that those in similar positions act similarly. For example, White has shown that distinct cliques in a monastery acted similarly both in terms of who among other monks they liked, esteemed, and praised, and in terms of how they quit the monastery when a crisis erupted.¹³⁵ In a study on the behavior of bank wiremen (those whose job it is to wire money between banks), those in the same physical location (front room and back room) acted similarly in terms of claiming allowances.¹³⁶ Additionally, those in similar positions in a company (research and development managers, sales managers, and executives) were shown to have similar attitudes towards company policy over against those in other positions in a period of conflict.¹³⁷ Further, two studies have shown that “the poor” are more likely to view and use money similarly, and are more likely to turn to their social network for financial advice rather than seek advice from professionals such as a financial planner.¹³⁸ Beyond these

129 Nadel, *Social Structure*, 49. Of course, if the deviance is great enough, the larger social structure can enact punishment as well through the legal system.

130 Arnold M. Rose, *Sociology: The Study of Human Relations* (New York: Knopf, 1965), 104–5, would call such punishments “informal” punishments.

131 Nadel, *Social Structure*, 51.

132 Ferligoj, Doreian, and Batagelj, “Positions and Roles,” 434.

133 Nadel, *Social Structure*, 58.

134 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 13.

135 Harrison C. White, Scott A. Boorman, and Ronald L. Breiger “Social Structure from Multiple Networks. I. Blockmodels of Roles and Positions,” *American Journal of Sociology* 81/4 (1976): 751–4.

136 White, Boorman, and Breiger, “Social Structure,” 754–8.

137 White, Boorman, and Breiger, “Social Structure,” 758–63.

138 The language of “the poor” is used in both studies. That “the poor” are likely to view and use money similarly see, Viviana A. Zelizer, *The Social Meaning of Money* (New York: Basic

modern experiments, Clark has shown convincingly that “the social context,” that is the social networks of Jerome and Rufinus, better explains their “airy” theological debate.¹³⁹ She concludes, “Network analysts would claim that the sheer density of these clusters largely explains the complexity and heat of the controversy.”¹⁴⁰ The Origenist controversy is similar to the monastery and corporate examples above, in that one can see similar attitudes by those in respective networks. Further, White mentions in passing that those in “senatorial aristocracy,” including Cicero, Crassus, Julius Caesar, and Pliny the younger, used money similarly by giving no interest loans to other senators to ensure political support.¹⁴¹ In this example, the elite, rather than the poor, use money similarly. Given that social experiments confirm the theoretical background of social network theory, we see that social network theory can offer a valuable way forward in understanding how early Christian authors understood the circulation of their texts in terms of the expected circulation to geographic locales seen in other early Christian authors. We have reason to think that early Christian authors acted typically. Although that does not negate the possibility that authors might have deviated, it is important to see deviation as *atypical*.

3.2 *Positions and Roles in Early Christianity*

Authors in early Christianity tended to be those who held authority. This is unsurprising given the privileged status of literate persons in the ancient world.¹⁴² By “literate persons” I mean those able to author a literary text without necessarily meaning the person who puts pen to papyrus. This is important to state explicitly since “illiterate” people in the ancient world could attain familiarity with texts through recitations and dramatic performances of various literary works, public readings of official decrees, public readings of religious texts, and access to scribes for various needs.¹⁴³ Gamble suggests that literacy “was undoubtedly a primary desideratum of Christian leaders and teachers from the earliest days.”¹⁴⁴ It is obvious that several of the earliest

Books, 1994). That “the poor” are more likely to use their social network than a professional see, Mariko Lin Chang, “With a Little Help from My Friends (and My Financial Planner),” *Social Forces* 83/4 (2005): 1469–98.

139 Clark, “Elite Networks,” 97.

140 Clark, “Elite Networks,” 95.

141 White, “Finding the Ties that Bind,” 4.

142 Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 8–10; Chris Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy: Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee*, LNTS 413 (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011), 88, 110.

143 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 8. Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, 89–110, shows a range of meanings of “literacy” and people’s ability to be placed into various “literacy spectrums.”

144 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 9.

Christian leaders had this ability, including those behind the Apostolic Decree (Acts 15:23), Paul, the author of Luke-Acts, the author of FG (Jn. 21:24), Ignatius, Clement, and Dionysius of Corinth to name a few. As Gamble concludes, "In a community in which texts had a constitutive importance and only a few persons were literate, it was inevitable that those who were able to explicate texts would acquire authority for that reason alone."¹⁴⁵

This study, however, focuses on the position of author rather than authority figures, because it cannot be assumed that all authors came from this authoritative position. As Gamble says, there were "a small minority of Christians who were not clerics [that] were literate."¹⁴⁶ Pseudonymous authors, for example, lacked authority to have their published text accepted and so took on the name of one who did possess authority.¹⁴⁷ Alternatively, perhaps, a pseudonymous author continued in the tradition of an authoritative figure, and so appealed to his already authoritative status.¹⁴⁸ Because the position "author" can include non-authority figures, it is a more helpful category to examine than authorities.

It is important to note a crucial aspect of why environments do not affect "actors" (for my purposes those actors are authors) independently, which lies at the beginning of Marin and Wellman's explanation above, namely "the constraints, opportunities, and perceptions created by network positions."¹⁴⁹ There is a considerable constraint on authors in the ancient world. Ancient authors had functionally no control of their text after it was published.¹⁵⁰ This is seen in the Greek words for "publication," ἐκδιδόναι and ἐκδοσις, which both literally refer to giving up. As Easterling notes, "These words imply the activity not of a publisher or a bookseller, but of the author himself, who 'abandons' his work to the public; he gives them the opportunity to read it, to recopy it, to pass it on, to others. From that moment the text goes off at random."¹⁵¹ In addition

¹⁴⁵ Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 9–10.

¹⁴⁶ Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 10.

¹⁴⁷ E.g. Schmiedel's explanation for the association of Johannine texts with the apostle John discussed above, p. 16.

¹⁴⁸ See, for example the discussion in David G. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon: An Investigation into the Relationship of Authorship and Authority in Jewish and Earliest Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 190–7.

¹⁴⁹ Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 13.

¹⁵⁰ E. J. Kenney, "Books and Readers in the Roman World," in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature: Latin Literature*, ed. E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 19.

¹⁵¹ P. E. Easterling, "Books and Readers in the Greek World: The Hellenistic and Imperial Periods" in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature* eds. P. E. Easterling and B. M. W. Knox, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 20.

to the words used for publication, several ancient authors discuss the lack of control they had over their text after it was published.

Though he lived several centuries before the authors of our period, Plato is the first to comment on the lack of control authors had over their texts after publication: “Once it is written, it is bandied about, alike among those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak; when ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its father to help it; for it has no power to protect or help itself” (Plato, *Phaedr.* 275e [Fowler, LCL]). Closer to our period Horace says:

You seem, my book, to be looking wistfully toward Vertumnus and Janus, in order, forsooth, that you may go on sale, neatly polished with the pumice of the Sosii ... You grieve at being shown to few, and praise a life in public, though I did not rear you thus. Off with you, down to where you itch to go. When you are once let out, there will be no coming back. “What, alas! Have I done? What did I want,” you will say ... You will be loved in Rome till your youth leave you; when you’ve been well thumbled by vulgar hands and begin to grow soiled, you will either in silence be food for vandal moths, or will run away to Utica, or be sent in bonds to Ilerda.

HORACE, *Ep.* 20 [Fairclough, LCL]

Interestingly, Horace personifies his book, with its desires to be set free from its limited exposure. More importantly for my purposes, however, is the lack of control Horace has after the text is released: “there will be no coming back.” This is similar to Horace’s statement in *Ars Poetica*, “What you have not published you can destroy; the word once sent forth can never come back” (389–90 [Fairclough, LCL]). Further, he says that the text could circulate widely from where he was in Rome; Utica and Ilerda are in Africa and Spain, respectively. Here it seems that the lack of control leads the author to expect circulation well beyond his locale.

Martial and Pliny, near contemporaries of New Testament authors, also attest to the lack of control had over texts after publication. Martial, like Horace, addresses his personified text and warns it about the dangers of publication, finally offering it the freedom it craves, albeit with a warning: “Wanton one to flit through the airs of heaven, Go! Fly! Yet you might have been safer at home” (*Epigrams* 1.3 [Ker, LCL]). Pliny, appealing Octavius to publish his poems, says, “Suffer them, I entreat you, to come abroad, and to be admired ... Some few poems of yours have already, contrary to your inclinations indeed,

broke their prison and escaped to light" (*Ep.* 2.10). Here, again, we see the wide circulation—"send them abroad"—and the lack of control—"broke their prison and escaped to light."

Finally, after the period of the New Testament authors, Symmachus says, "Once a Poem has left your hands, you resign all your rights; a speech when published is a free entity."¹⁵² Thus, we see, in the period before, contemporaneously with, and after the period of the writing of the New Testament texts, that authors had little control over their texts, and that this in turn led them to view circulation as circulation to multiple locales. This is especially clear in Horace and Pliny, who explicitly note distance being covered in circulation, and it may be implicit Martial who says his text wants to fly through the heavens. This raises the question, then, of whether New Testament authors would expect similarly broad circulation of their texts, given the constraints facing ancient authors.

Although no New Testament author explicitly refers to the lack of control they had over their text(s), Augustine and Jerome do. Augustine writes to Aurelius, bishop of Carthage:

I had laid the work [*De Trinitate*] aside after discovering that it had been carried off prematurely or purloined from me before I had completed it or revised and corrected it as I had planned ... Since my plan could not be carried out on account of the persons who got access to the books before I wished, I discontinued my interrupted dictation, thinking to make a complaint about this in some of my other writings, so that those who could might know that those books had not been published by me but filched from me before I thought them worthy of being published in my name.¹⁵³

Augustine does not explicitly say that he expects this text to circulate beyond his initial audience as a result of this lack of control, but the lack of control is obvious from the phrase "access to the books before I wished." It is also clear that he expects it to circulate beyond the initial audience: "I send [*De Trinitate*] now to Your Reverence by my son and very dear fellow deacon, and I give my permission for it to be heard, *copied*, and read by any who wish."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Symmachus, *Ep.* 1.31. Trans. Kenney, "Books and Readers," 19.

¹⁵³ *Ep.* 174, translation Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 133.

¹⁵⁴ *Ep.* 174, translation Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 133–4.

Jerome, echoing the words of some of the ancient authors discussed above, says to Desiderius, “Several of my little pieces have flown away out of the nest, and have rashly sought for themselves the honor of publication.”¹⁵⁵ It is unclear in whom this “rashness” originates. Jerome attributes it to the texts themselves, but this is obviously metaphorical. The question is, “Is it Jerome’s rashness or someone else’s?” The justification for possibly attributing the rashness to another can be seen in his complaint to Pammachius: “When once I have written anything, either my admirers or my ill-wishers—from different motives, but with equal zeal—sow my work broadcast among the public.”¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the circulation of these texts affects the way Jerome circulates them. He does not send Desiderius copies because he does not want to send Desiderius copies of texts he already has (*Ep.* 47.3). In other words, Jerome does not know how widely his texts have circulated. In case Desiderius does not have them, Jerome tells him where he can get copies of them (*Ep.* 47.3). From these two later Christian authors, we see that the lack of control over texts extended to Christian texts as well. Although neither explicitly says that they expect their texts to circulate widely as a result of their lack of control, wide circulation is at least clearly seen as a possibility for Jerome, who did not send a text to Desiderius in case he had already gotten a copy. Augustine also expected his text to circulate beyond its initial audience, and we will see that several New Testament authors expected their text(s) to circulate to multiple locales, including all Christians.

The Gospel for All Christians opened important discussions about the nature of the Gospels, how they ought to be interpreted and how they circulated. The primary focus of the book and subsequent discussion has focused on interpretation. Thus far, circulation has been ignored beyond its initial treatment in *GAC*. Further, in spite of the inclusion of non-canonical gospels, epistolary literature has not played a significant role in the discussion. This is primarily the result of the focus on interpretation. However, I argued above that differing genres do not necessarily entail differing expectations of circulation. Determining the norms of circulation, both by the author and in practice, will show the possible expectations that the evangelists could have had, though I stress that it can be stated *only* in terms of likelihood or possibility. I have said this multiple times in this chapter but it bears repeating to emphasize my

¹⁵⁵ *Ep.* 47.3 (NPNF² 6:197).

¹⁵⁶ *Ep.* 49.2 (NPNF² 6:223).

claim, an evangelist or the evangelists may have acted atypically.¹⁵⁷ It would be incumbent upon a scholar to present a case that an evangelist was acting atypically because all the evidence we possess suggests that many early Christian authors *expected* their texts to circulate and early Christians *actually* circulated their texts beyond their initial locales, in keeping with what we find in ancient literature generally.

¹⁵⁷ I state the act of an evangelist circulating a text for a specific community as atypical because I will argue in the following chapter that early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales.

Expected Circulation of Early Christian Epistolary Literature

1 Circulation to Multiple Locales

At the end of the first chapter, I showed how epistolary literature has largely been ignored in the discussion concerning *GAC*, and especially by *GAC* contributors. They placed greater emphasis on matters concerning interpretation than circulation. They caricatured the audiences of Pauline letters and almost completely ignored the general epistles. Further, I suggested that authors' expectations in texts where we do know audiences are explicitly mentioned might indicate comparable expectations in texts in which audiences are not explicitly mentioned. This chapter will examine the *expected* audiences in early Christian letters. I will demonstrate that many early Christian letter writers expected their letters to circulate to multiple locales and some early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to all Christians. This will be done by examining texts that explicitly state that they are to be read in multiple locales and texts in which the audience is (perhaps deliberately) ambiguous. The texts to be discussed are Colossians; 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; 1 Peter; James; Jude; Revelation 2–3; the Apostolic Decree; the Shepherd of Hermas; the Martyrdom of Polycarp; and 1 Corinthians. In this chapter, I discuss Pauline literature but also self-consciously move beyond the Pauline letters to include other epistolary evidence so as to gain a wider perspective on early Christian authors' expectations of circulation. I will also, in the conclusion of this chapter, briefly examine other ancient authors' circulation of letters to multiple recipients in order to show that it was not uncommon in the ancient world for authors to expect or facilitate the circulation of their letters to multiple locales.

There are two critical issues in this chapter: (1) the addressed recipients and (2) the use of explicit locales to identify those recipients. The addressed recipients are one of the primary indications that a text was expected to circulate. In the case of free-standing letters (i.e. letters not embedded in a text), if multiple locales are included in recipients (e.g. 2 Cor. 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1) or multiple churches in a region (e.g. Galatians 1:2), it indicates that the author expected that his letter would circulate to those locales. Embedded letters reveal circulation in a different way. They can either contain an address to multiple locales

(Acts 15:23) or the narrative may reveal an assumed (whether actual or not) circulation (Acts 16:4, 21:25; Rev. 1:11, 19).

The other important issue in this chapter is the distinction between “locale” and “community.” There were Christian communities in the various locales; otherwise, there would have been no reason to write a letter to a given locale. For example, 1 Thessalonians is addressed to the church of the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:1), which is an identifiable geographical locale. Texts will be discussed based on their address. Texts addressed to multiple locales or all Christians offer clear evidence that the author expected them to circulate to their respective addressees. Not all texts to be discussed in this chapter are addressed to specific locales. Some texts are addressed to a community or communities (e.g. Jude 1). I use “community” to mean a collection of persons with common interests living in a larger society. Texts that are not addressed to multiple locales, but to communities, as I have defined them above, offer *potential* evidence that they were to circulate beyond a single locale. The general features of these letters might indicate that the lack of a specific locale was deliberate in order for the text to be read in many locales.

There is one final point to note before moving to an investigation of the letters. Some readers may assume that Paul’s letters written to multiple communities or 1 Peter imply letters written to “Pauline” communities or “Petrine” communities, respectively. They also may assume that this observation mitigates the force of my argument. It might be said that this shows that an evangelist did not write to a specific community in a specific locale, but to a specific community (i.e. a coherent, distinct group) located in multiple locales.¹ This line of thinking, however, continues to operate under the assumption that distinct theological or ideological views necessarily entail distinct and isolated communities, as I discussed in chapter one. This view, however, is unwarranted, and I will show that it cannot be upheld in light of the evidence from early Christian letters.²

I begin to illustrate this point by looking at the communities in Paul’s letters. The simple question is: “How Pauline were the Pauline communities?”³ That is, how much do the Pauline communities reflect a distinctly Pauline theology in isolation from other early Christian theologies? That there were “Pauline

1 Sim, “Gospels?” 20, makes exactly this concession.

2 I have argued similarly and included evidence from Gospel traditions as well in, David A. Smith, “Once More Against Gospel Communities: Another Cautionary Tale” (paper presented at the Midwest Region of the SBL, Notre Dame, IN, 11 Feb. 2017).

3 David G. Horrell, “Pauline Churches or Early Christian Churches? Unity, Disagreement, and the Eucharist” in *Einheit der Kirche im Neuen Testament*, eds. Anatoly A. Alexeev, Christos Karakolis and Ulrich Luz, WUNT 218 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 190.

communities" is not in dispute; insofar as "Pauline community" means a church established by the mission work of Paul and his associates (as seen in, e.g., 2 Cor. 1:19).⁴ The earliest view we get of any community in Paul's letters is the Antioch community in Gal. 2:11–14. Whenever one dates the letter, it is generally acknowledged that the Antioch incident reflects an early conflict prior to Paul's second missionary journey.⁵ From this text, we learn that Jewish and Gentile Christians at least ate together in Antioch.⁶ Further, the leader of the mission to the Jews and the leader of the Gentiles ate together (Gal. 2:12).⁷ From Galatians we see that Jewish Christians were not simply in the Galatian communities but influential in them (Gal. 1:6). We see additional evidence of non-separate communities in 1 and 2 Corinthians. We see that there are multiple groups *together* (1 Cor. 1:12), two of which represent so called "Pauline" and "Jewish" Christianity.⁸ Paul writes his letter to all the Corinthian believers and calls them his brothers and sisters (1 Cor. 1:11). Conzelmann points out that "there is no ground for the assumption that Peter's people reject Paul" and that "Paul's attack is not Peter and his party, but all parties."⁹ If distinct communities were isolated, we should expect to find the opposite of what Conzelmann says. Additionally, we find those who are threatening Paul's congregation (from Paul's point of view) in 2 Corinthians. Regardless of who the groups are connected to, it is clear from Paul's language that they are not "Pauline" Christians, noting especially the "us vs. them" language (2 Cor. 10:10, 12, 15; 11:4, 12). Again, we see that this other, non-Pauline group is *in* Paul's Corinthian community.¹⁰ Paul also knows that there are "rival preachers" in the city where he was jailed (Phil. 1:15), and his warning to the Philippians to watch out for the "dogs" suggest that the Philippian Christians were not isolated or separated from other early Christian communities (Phil. 3:2). From Paul's letters alone, we see already that early Christian communities were not isolated from one another. Horrell concludes from the evidence of the Pauline letters: "There is no clear evidence of any alternative Petrine or Jacobite community down the street from a Pauline

4 Horrell, "Pauline Churches?" 189.

5 J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians*, AB 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 229; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 105 n. 436; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 128; Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 106; Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Grand Rapids: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 71.

6 Horrell, "Pauline Churches?" 192.

7 Horrell, "Pauline Churches?" 192.

8 Horrell, "Pauline Churches?" 193.

9 Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 34.

10 Horrell, "Pauline Churches?" 193.

one. Rather, these figures and their representatives turn up in the same communities and compete for influence among the same group of converts.”¹¹

Other early Christian letters evidence similarly non-isolated communities. For example, even though the opponents faced by the author(s) of 1 and 2 John are said to have “gone out” from “the community” (1 Jn. 2:19; 4:1; 2 Jn. 7), they nevertheless remain active *in* the Johannine community. They try to deceive those loyal to the elder (1 Jn. 2:26) and seek hospitality from them (2 Jn. 10). Horrell’s words above about competing for influence among the same group of converts applies to the Johannine community as well. Further, the author of Jude says that “certain people have crept in [among you]” (Jude 4), and that those people shared in their love feasts (Jude 12). That these two groups shared a common love feast serves to confirm the conclusion of Horrell:

In any particular locality, rather than a *Pauline* church celebrating the Lord’s Supper, or whatever we might call their ritual meal, we have an *early Christian* church doing so. In terms of its local, communal, and commensual embodiment, early Christianity may indeed have been more ‘ecumenical’ than we imply when we talk of Pauline, Matthean, or Petrine communities and imagine these partisan communities celebrating their own Eucharist. However, this does not mean that these early Christian communities were united, harmonious, or theologically monochrome. We can and must accept that the early Christian churches were from the start diverse, internally and in comparison with one another; early Christian missionaries proclaimed different versions of the gospel, and—at least if Paul is anything to go by—argued vehemently against those who thought differently ... There is no evidence to support the notion that in its earliest period, Christianity’s diversity was embodied in distinct communities in which there was a shared allegiance to a particular form of Christianity, Pauline, Petrine, or whatever.¹²

In light of the evidence from epistolary literature presented above, Horrell’s conclusion is, in my opinion, absolutely correct. Thus, the objection that early Christian authors of letters or Gospels wrote to those who shared their distinct theological viewpoints *alone* would need to be demonstrated in order to constitute a legitimate objection.

¹¹ Horrell, “Pauline Churches?” 195.

¹² Horrell, “Pauline Churches?” 203, *italics original*.

1.1 *Pauline Epistles*

The Pauline epistles are the earliest extant Christian writings.¹³ We can, therefore, learn a great deal from the audiences addressed in these epistles. Second Corinthians, Galatians, and Colossians provide evidence that Paul (or a member of his circle) circulated letters to multiple locales. Ephesians provides potential evidence for circulation.

1.1.1 Colossians

I begin with Colossians because it is the clearest example of a Pauline text that was meant to be read in more than one locale. I refer to the letter as “Pauline,” but Colossians’ place as an authentic Pauline letter is “debatable.”¹⁴ Regardless of whether one believes Colossians is Pauline or deutero-Pauline, it does not change the fact that an early Christian writer expected this letter to circulate. As we will see, Paul expected several of his letters to circulate to multiple locales. If Paul wrote Colossians, it would be in keeping with his practice. If Paul did not write Colossians, it would be an example of a disciple following in his teacher’s example, as we will see through the discussion of other undisputed Pauline letters.

Colossians 4:16 is the only statement of its kind in the New Testament. Paul asks the community in one city to share its letter with the community in another city. Paul believed that this letter for the Colossians was relevant for a church in another locale,¹⁵ and wanted the letter to be passed on to Laodicea. It is not unrealistic to think, given the proximity of Colossae and Laodicea, that the trouble in Colossae had found its way into Laodicea, though this is unknowable.¹⁶ It is striking that Paul thought that the letter to the Colossians (Col. 1:2), which has the Colossian situation in view throughout, would be meaningful to the Christians in Laodicea.

Colossians was therefore meant to be read in at least two locales. But some have argued that Colossians betrays a wider, “universelle Relevanz.”¹⁷

13 So, Heinrich Julius Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der Historisch-Kritischen Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck, 1886), 230: “Mit Paulus beginnt die literarische Existenz des Christentums.”

14 Georg Werner Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1973), 251.

15 Markus Barth and Helmut Blanke, *Colossians*, trans. Astrid B. Beck, AB 34B (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 487; James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, NIGTC (Carlisle: Eerdmans, 1996), 286.

16 Norbert Hagedé, *L’Épître aux Colossiens* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1968), 218–9, argues that the trouble in Colossae made its way to Laodicea.

17 Angela Standhartinger, *Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte und Intention des Kolosserbriefs*, NovTSup 04 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 15. See also, Nicole Frank, *Der Kolosserbrief im Kontext*

Standhartinger bases her position on the phrase “all those who have not seen me face to face” in Col. 2:1,¹⁸ the “Nennung und Mitadressierung an die Gemeinde in Laodizea (und Hierapolis vg. 2,1; 4,13.15f),”¹⁹ and Paul’s emphasis on “πάντα ἄνθρωπον” in Col. 1:28.²⁰ Whether she is right about this or not, her point about the mentioning of Laodicea and especially Hierapolis make it likely that Paul has in mind *at least* these three communities. Lohse also suggests that Colossians was “aimed at a larger circle of readers with the intention of teaching Christians in Asia Minor.”²¹ In light of the reference to Hierapolis in Col. 4:13, it is possible that these scholars are correct to suggest that the letter was read in other locales. Regardless, however, of whether they are correct, it is clear that it was expected at least to be read in two locales.

1.1.2 Second Corinthians

The authenticity of 2 Corinthians has never seriously been questioned.²² Its literary integrity, however, has been much debated. While some critics have posited up to six different letters that form canonical 2 Corinthians,²³ many see only two.²⁴ There are, however, a growing number of scholars who believe that

des paulinischen Erbes: eine intertextuelle Studie zur Auslegung und Fortschreibung des Paulustradition (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 36–40, esp. 40.

18 Standhartinger, *Studien*, 13.

19 Standhartinger, *Studien*, 15.

20 Standhartinger, *Studien*, 15.

21 Eduard Lohse, *A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, trans. William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Karris, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 181.

22 Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi. Sein Leben und Wirken, seine Briefe und seine Lehrer*, 2nd ed. Vol. 1 (Leipzig: Fues's Verlag, 1866), 276. See also S. J. Hafemann, “Corinthians, Letters to the,” *DPL* 175.

23 Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: History and Literature of Early Christianity* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987) 53–4; Dennis Duling and Norman Perrin, *The New Testament: Proclamation and Paranesis, Myth and History*, 3rd ed. (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace, 1994), 178–83; Steven L. Davies., *New Testament Fundamentals* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1994), 178–83; Hans Dieter Betz, “Corinthians, Second Epistle to the,” *ABD* 1:1149–50.

24 Victor P. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, AB 32B (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 32–41; Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, WBC 8 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986), xlv; Edwin Freed, *The New Testament: A Critical Introduction* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1991), 263–5; Stephen Harris, *The New Testament: A Students Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1995) 260–2; Bart Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 280–5. Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 31 and Ben Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*

2 Corinthians is a unified document.²⁵ I take the position that it is a unified document.

It is important that I defend this position because it affects several interpretive issues, including scholarly views of the audience. One of the principal reasons that scholars hold to the idea that the letter is made up of multiple letters, and especially the two letter theory, is the change in tone in chapters 10–13.²⁶ This change of tone is believed to be the result of a second letter sent to the Corinthians after the situation had deteriorated.²⁷ However, it is not as evident as some would like that chapters 1–7 are Paul's thanksgiving for the Corinthians' reconciliation.²⁸ Paul's thanksgiving (2 Cor. 7:7–11), for example, suggests that Paul's "tearful letter" (2 Cor. 2:4) accomplished what Paul had hoped to some extent. But there is other evidence that it was not a complete success. Prior to Paul making his thanksgiving for the Corinthians reconciliation (2 Cor. 7:7–11), he says, "We have spoken freely to you Corinthians; our heart is open wide to you. You are not restricted in us, but you restrict your affection. In the same way—I speak as to children—enlarge your affection. Make room for us" (2 Cor. 6:11–13; 7:2a). It appears that not everyone in the Corinthian community had been won over to Paul's side. Additionally, in 2 Cor. 3:1, Paul says that he and his team do not need letters of commendation to or from the Corinthians, but he goes on to commend his and his team's practice of ministry in 2 Cor. 4:1 ("We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice

(Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995), 331 say that "many" hold to the position that 2 Cor. is a combination of two letters, though they do not.

- 25 W. H. Bates, "The Integrity of II Corinthians," *NTS* 12/1 (1965): 56–69; Frances Young and D. F. Ford, *Meaning and Truth in Second Corinthians*, BFT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 27–59; Frederick W. Danker, *II Corinthians*, ACNT (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1989); 18–20;—, "Paul's Debt to the *De Corona* of Demonsthenes: A Study of Rhetorical Techniques in Second Corinthians," in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of G. A. Kennedy*, ed. D. F. Watson, JSNTSup 50 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 270–80; Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 333; Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1997), 17–25; James M. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 6–7; David. E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, NAC 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 33–44; Jan Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, SP 8 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 9; David Amador Hester, "The Unity of 2 Corinthians: A Test Case for a Re-discovered and Re-invented Rhetoric," *Neot* 33/2 (1999): 411–32; idem "Revisiting 2 Corinthians: Rhetoric and the Case for Unity," *NTS* 46 (2000): 92–111; Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 32; Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 29; Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 51.
- 26 E.g. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 36.
- 27 Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 45.
- 28 Kümmel, *Introduction*, 290. Similarly, Bates, "Integrity," 63: "[Second Corinthians 6:11–13; 7:2–4] could not have been written in a situation where all was well."

cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth *we commend ourselves* to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God"; see also 2 Cor. 6:4–10). The language of the first nine chapters reveals that there were still tensions in the community. Thus, to divide the letter on the basis of what might appear to be two different circumstances will not do.

Another reason to believe that 2 Corinthians is a unified letter is that many of the arguments in the first nine chapters set up or correspond to arguments in the last four.²⁹ An example of this is found in 2 Cor. 4:5, which establishes the conduct of Paul and his team who are "slaves" (δούλους) of the Corinthians. The conduct of Paul directly opposes the behavior of the outsiders who are said "to enslave" (καταδουλοῖ) and abuse the Corinthians in 11:20. Another example is in 6:4–5, 8–10. The commendation of Paul's missionary team is based on their hardships, as Paul's commendation is in 11:23–29, though in 6:6–7 virtues are included in the commendation. Yet another example is Paul's use of certain terms, including: "confidence" (πεποίθις, θάρρος, ὑπόστασις), "boasting" (καύχησις, καύχημα, καυχάομαι), and "obedience" (ὑπακοή) which are all part of the rhetorical buildup which make chapters 10–13 so effective.³⁰ In all of these examples, we see that there are themes that run through the letter that suggest a unified composition.

Having argued for the unity of the letter, I can discuss the audience of the letter. Second Corinthians is addressed "to the church of God which is in Corinth and all of the saints who are in Achaia" (2 Cor. 1:1). The Achaia, however, have been routinely ignored in the history of interpretation of this letter.³¹ There are good reasons for this. The majority of the letter appears to be related to the Corinthians and their interaction with Paul.³² The Corinthians are the ones that grieved him (2:3, 5) not the other Achaia. Paul says that he did not return to Corinth in order to spare the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:23). Paul emphatically tells

29 Amador, "Revisiting 2 Corinthians," 99.

30 Amador, "Revisiting 2 Corinthians," 99.

31 For example, Craig S. Keener, *1–2 Corinthians*, NIBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 157 acknowledges that the Achaia are included in the addressees, but then refers to the audience as "Corinthians" alone on the same page and then through the rest of the commentary (e.g. 165, 170, 172, 183, 211, 229). Martin, *Second Corinthians*, 283, 347 respectively references the Achaian recipients when the province is mentioned in 9:2 and 11:10. Throughout the rest of the commentary the audience is referred to as "Corinthians." Matera, *II Corinthians*, 39, also acknowledges that the Achaia are included along with the Corinthians as the addressees, but, like Keener, refers to the recipients as "Corinthians" (e.g. 82, 110, 154, 254). Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, 18 is a notable exception: "When in this commentary the Christians of Corinth are referred to, those of Achaia should be included."

32 Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 106.

them that he and his team have been honest with the Corinthians (2 Cor. 6:11). Achaia is mentioned only twice: once in connection with the collection (9:2) and once about a boast (11:10). Chrysostom's first homily on 2 Corinthians contains the earliest secondary statement about the recipients, and he says that the Corinthians are the recipients.³³ With all of this evidence, it is little wonder that modern scholarship has followed suit by referring to the audience of the epistle as the Corinthians.

Despite the epistle having the Corinthian situation in view, Paul believed that the letter would be meaningful for a wider Achaian community, and he addressed it so that it would circulate to them as well. Paul does not indicate why he chose to address the Achaians.³⁴ That he expected them to read this letter, however, is clear. He addresses them (2 Cor. 1:1). Here we have another example of a text focused on a single community that was expected to circulate to multiple locales, like Colossians. From these first two examples, with their foci on the situations of the respective communities, it is clear that interpretation, by which I mean knowledge of the situation of the community, is one thing. Circulation to multiple locales is quite another.

1.1.3 Galatians

Galatians is another example of a letter addressed to more than one locale. Paul calls the recipients "the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2). There is a standing debate about whether Galatians was written to churches in the north or the south of Galatia.³⁵ This debate does not affect my argument; my only focus is the multiple addressees. In order to demonstrate my point, however, I will examine an argument for the north Galatian audience made by Jerome Murphy-O'Connor and Philip Esler.

33 Chrysostom, *Hom. 2 Cor. 1:2*.

34 The oldest and most common answer is that the problem of the false teachers had spread out from Corinth. Chrysostom, *Hom. 2 Cor. 1.2* (*NPNF*¹ 12: 272): "What then can be the reason of this? Because, as I think, in this case all were involved in one common disorder, wherefore also he addresses them in common, as needing one common remedy." See also, Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 20; Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 46–7, Margaret E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, vol. 1, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 88 has also been suggested that the address includes Christians who "though not actually members of the Corinthian congregation, were sufficiently in touch with the church there to be cognizant of what was happening and likely, also, to be influenced by the Corinthians' own attitude toward Paul"

35 Standard arguments for the northern view can be found in J. B. Lightfoot, *Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, (London: Macmillan, 1866), 18–32. Standard arguments for southern view can be found in Ernest De Witt Burton, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), xxi–xliv.

In arguing for a north Galatian audience, both Murphy-O'Connor and Esler argue that the distance between Derbe and Pisidian Antioch, 286 km,³⁶ makes it unlikely that Paul would have addressed this letter to churches in the south. Esler says, "The distance makes it rather unlikely that they had anything so specific in common or that Paul would want to deal with them collectively."³⁷ Murphy-O'Connor asks, "But is it really likely that Paul would have written a single letter to so many and so diverse churches?"³⁸ Then he answers, "The improbability is accentuated by their dispersion."³⁹ Murphy-O'Connor says that Paul stayed in Pessinus and that he preached to pilgrims coming to the shrine of Cybele, who could then take the gospel to their homes.⁴⁰ He concludes, "[Paul] saw in such visitors the possibility of reaching out into the vast hinterland which he could never hope to cover. Returning to their homes they could carry his message to places to which he could not go, and whose names he may not even have known. *Perhaps this is why the address of the letter is so vague.*"⁴¹ If Murphy-O'Connor is correct, then not even Paul knew all the locales where his letter would circulate. Again, if this is true, it serves to bolster my argument.

The point of the above discussion is not to decide whether Galatians was written to the northern or southern churches. It is to answer Murphy-O'Connor's question. The answer is yes, contra Murphy-O'Connor—Paul could have written a single letter to these diverse and dispersed churches. Whether Paul wrote to churches in the south, which were 286 km apart, or to churches in the north, where not even he knew where it would circulate, Paul expected that his letter would circulate. Regardless of which position one takes regarding the location of the churches, it is impossible to escape the circulation to multiple locales.

1.1.4 Ephesians

There are a number of issues concerning Ephesians. I will start by noting again that Ephesians place as a genuine Pauline is contested. Yet, as with Colossians, one's conclusion about authorship makes little difference to the question of the audience, and specifically circulation to multiple locales, since as we have

36 Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 161; Philip F. Esler, *Galatians*, NTR (London: Routledge, 1998), 33. Murphy-O'Connor cites this distance from Robert Jewett, *Dating Paul's Life* (London: SCM, 1979), 59, and Esler cites the distance from O'Connor.

37 Esler, *Galatians*, 33.

38 Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 161.

39 Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 161.

40 Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 192–3. Esler, *Galatians*, 34 follows him on this point.

41 Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 193 (*italics added*).

already noted, Paul wrote letters with the expectation that they would circulate, as we have seen in the two previous examples. The problem of the audience, however, is particularly difficult since, as I will discuss below, it seems that the letter was first dispatched without an addressed audience. This letter, thus, provides *possible* evidence of circulation to multiple locales.

The difficulty of the audience of Ephesians is well known. The lack of the phrase ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1:1 in P⁴⁶ ⲁ and B in the major witnesses and comments from Basil and Origen that their manuscripts do not contain addressees have led scholars to conclude that it was not in the original manuscript of the letter to the Ephesians.⁴² The lack of any recipients and the general features of the letter have led some scholars to the conclusion that this letter was meant to be circulated to many churches.⁴³

The lack of a destination in the text could result from one of three phenomena: (1) Paul did not have a locale in the text and expected it to circulate, as noted above;⁴⁴ (2) a different destination was in the text and was changed;⁴⁵ (3) “in Ephesus” was in the original draft and was removed in order to aid circulation to multiple locales. We know the final option did happen (cf. the variant reading in Rom. 1:7, 15 in G and Rom. 1:7 in Or^{1739mg}).⁴⁶ It seems likely, however, that removing the recipients in order to aid circulation, option three above, is not the case in this situation. According to Acts, Paul had spent three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31).⁴⁷ Yet according to Eph. 1:15; 3:2–3; 4:21, the author and the

42 Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 57–8, 103, call P⁴⁶ ⲁ and B “great” (57–8) because they are “before the period of the great text types” (103). Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 532, points out the importance of these witnesses in particular in the discussion of the audience of Ephesians. For the sake of ease, I will continue to refer to the letter as Ephesians.

43 Markus Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, AB 34A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 11; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 230; Francis Foulkes, *Ephesians*, TNTC 10 (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), 46–7; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, trans. Helen Heron (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 29; Ernest Best, *Ephesians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 2; Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians*, SP 17 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 17.

44 See previous footnote for a list of scholars who hold to this position.

45 Discussed in Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon and Ephesians*, 250.

46 See below, pp. 70–1, where I discuss Gamble’s treatment of this.

47 I am inclined to view Acts favorably as a source for Paul’s life. Although in this particular instance, there is certainly room for skepticism since this information comes in a speech (Acts 20:18–35). Several commentators (e.g. I. Howard Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles*, TNTC [Nottingham: Inter-Varsity, 1980], 44; F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1954), 10; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, AB 34C (London:

recipients did not know one another, which makes it unlikely that Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians, assuming dates typically given as listed above and assuming Acts is correct on this point.⁴⁸ According to Marcion, the recipients of this letter were the Laodiceans,⁴⁹ but there has never been a manuscript discovered to corroborate Marcion's claim.⁵⁰ Those extant MSS that do not contain "in Ephesus" either omit the location or add Ephesus in the margin; there has never been another location inserted. It is easier to believe, then, that a later scribe, knowing that all of Paul's other letters contained recipients, inserted "in Ephesus" into the text.⁵¹ Paul or one of his followers, however, might have expected the text to circulate to multiple locales. I have shown above that Paul did expect some letters to circulate; thus, it would be in keeping with his practice.

1.1.5 *Nebenadressat*

Although they are not addressed to multiple locales and do not contain any command for further circulation, some scholars have suggested that Romans and Philippians should be understood as having a wider audience. This wider audience comes from the audience of the communities in which the letters were written, the "Nebenadressat." Charlotte Hartwig and Gerd Theißen first introduced this concept to New Testament studies. They observe that early Christian literature arose in a culture of oral communication.⁵² Hartwig and Theißen suggest that Paul reformulated themes from the Corinthian correspondence in dialogue with the Corinthians while he was in Corinth writing

Doubleday, 1998), 105, remind us of the words of Thucydides, who says that the speeches in his history are a general sense of what was said (*Hist.* 1.22.1), and apply them to Luke's own practice. In light of this observation, I proceed with due caution in the main text.

48 Douglas A. Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 312, dates Ephesians prior to Paul's arrival there, and so does not have this problem. He also believes Ephesians is really the letter to the Laodiceans, which (presumably) like Colossians Paul had also not visited.

49 Tertullian, *Marc.* 5.17.

50 So, Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians*, 250. Ulrich Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos: Rekonstruktion und historische Einordnung der marcionitischen Paulusbriefausgabe*, ANTF 25 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 286, however, sees Tertullian as a witness for manuscripts that *did* contain Laodicea in place of Ephesus. Some scholars have also thought that Ephesians is the letter to the Laodiceans (cf. Col. 4:16). E.g. Shirley Jackson Case, "To Whom Was 'Ephesians' Written?" *The Biblical World* 38/5 (1911): 315–320; Campbell, *Framing Paul*, 312.

51 Barth, *Ephesians* 1–3, 11.

52 Charlotte Hartwig and Gerd Theißen, "Die Korinthische Gemeinde als Nebenadressat des Römerbriefs: Eigentextreferenzen des Paulus und Kommunikativer Kontext des Längsten Paulusbriefes," *NovT* 46/3 (2004): 231.

Romans, and that these reformulated themes found their way into his letter to the Romans.⁵³ Important for their argument is their belief that

Paulus führt im Römerbrief und der Römerbriefkommunikation das Gespräch mit der korinthischen Gemeinde weiter. Er will vorher geäußerte Gedanken gegenüber der korinthischen Gemeinde korrigieren und ergänzen. Er erwartet dabei, dass die Adressaten in Korinth intertextuelle Bezüge in der Römerbriefkommunikation bzw. im Römerbrief auf vorhergehende Korintherbriefe registrieren und entsprechende Texte intertextuell „aufrufen“ können. Der Römerbrief hätte dann dialogische Bezüge zu den Korinthern. Je deutlicher und dichter sie sind, um so mehr kann man damit rechnen, dass der Römerbrief nicht nur durch mündliche Kommunikation in Korinth präsent war (was u.E. ziemlich sicher ist), sondern auch durch seine Endgestalt in Korinth wirken sollte.⁵⁴

It is this idea, that the local community at the place of the writing of the letter is a part of the conversation, that Campbell makes use of in his Pauline chronology.⁵⁵ For example, Campbell argues that the Corinthians are the *Nebenadressat* of Philippians.⁵⁶ The possibility that arises from an oral culture, namely that the *Nebenadressat* could have heard a letter or parts of a letter, is important for my purposes. Campbell says, “*both audiences are in view.*”⁵⁷ The previous observation leads Campbell to conclude, “Interpreters must learn to interpret Paul’s rhetoric in terms of multiple audiences that include a letter’s

53 Hartwig and Theißen, “Nebenadressat,” 231.

54 Hartwig and Theißen, “Nebenadressat,” 234.

55 Campbell, *Framing Paul*.

56 Campbell, *Framing Paul*, 146. Campbell’s reasoning that the Corinthians are the *Nebenadressat* is suspect. Campbell notes that one of the major concerns of Philippians is unity (147). However, Campbell notes that the only instance of disunity is the conflict between two women (Phil. 4:2–3), and the possible external opposition (Phil. 1:28; 3:2; Campbell, *Framing Paul*, 147). He says that there are three possibilities to explain the disjunction: 1) Paul is being heavy handed, 2) Paul is incompetent, or 3) that Paul is dealing with the problem of disunity in Corinth (148). Campbell opts for the last possibility (148). However, such a reading renders the letter virtually unintelligible to the Philippians. If there is no problem of disunity besides a minor quarrel (in Campbell’s reading), Paul is still being heavy handed or incompetent from a Philippian perspective. I suggest that there may have been a real problem in Philippi of which we know nothing. Perhaps the dispute between the two women is more substantial and both Paul and the Philippians know that. This does not invalidate a Corinthian *Nebenadressat*, but it does take into consideration the situation of the Philippians.

57 Campbell, *Framing Paul*, 55, italics original.

origin as well as its destination.”⁵⁸ I add here that caution is needed in this endeavor. If mirror reading the situations of the addressees requires caution, it requires more caution mirror reading the situation of the *Nebenadressat*.⁵⁹ The observation that Paul’s letters were intended for the addressed audience and the *Nebenadressat*, however, is important for my purposes as it suggests the possibility that some of Paul’s letters, even letters addressed to a single locale, were intended for multiple locales.

1.1.6 Pauline Conclusion

Paul (or a member of his school) was responsible for 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Colossians. The author(s) of those letters believed the letters needed to circulate to more than one locale. This shows that the view of Pauline epistles in *GAC* cannot be maintained. A more nuanced view of his epistles shows that Paul expected that some of his letters would circulate beyond a single locale.

Ephesians offers further evidence for the circulation of Pauline literature. Because of the lack of recipients, it is possible that this letter circulated to multiple locales. We cannot know that it did, but it would fit with the evidence above.

1.2 Catholic Epistles

I now turn to the general or catholic epistles. First Peter provides further evidence that some early Christian epistles were written to more than one locale. James and Jude, like Ephesians, do not give clear evidence about the locale(s) of their audiences, but they offer corroborating evidence that epistles did circulate to multiple locales. First Peter, James, and Jude show that the image of epistolary literature in *GAC* is incomplete with its focus on Paul.

1.2.1 First Peter

First Peter is addressed to those in the “Diaspora” in the Roman provinces of Pontus-Bithynia, Asia, Galatia, and Cappadocia (1 Pet. 1:1). On the basis of the author’s identification of his recipients in the Diaspora, many commentators have identified 1 Peter as a “Diaspora letter,”⁶⁰ though some are still reluctant

⁵⁸ Campbell, *Framing Paul*, 55.

⁵⁹ On the difficulty in mirror reading the situation of the addressees, see J. M. G. Barclay, “Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case” *JSNT* 31 (1987): 73–93.

⁶⁰ E.g. J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, WBC 49 (Waco: Word Books, 1988), xlv; Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1996), 62; Joel B. Green, *1 Peter*, THNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 5.

to acknowledge the Diaspora letter as a distinct genre.⁶¹ Lutz Doering, however, has demonstrated persuasively that Diaspora letters constitute a distinct genre, and that 1 Peter—and James and the Apostolic Decree—belong in this category.⁶² He notes four “features” of Diaspora letters: 1) “an attribution to an authoritative addressor”;⁶³ 2) “communication with Judaeans, Israelites, or Jews styled as living far away from Jerusalem” with an “address to a wide group of addressees, usually ‘all’ Judeans, Israelites, or Jews in a given area, thus representing ‘quasi-official’ letter writing”;⁶⁴ 3) “an emphasis on the cohesion between the members of the people of God in the homeland and abroad”;⁶⁵ 4) “an imbalance in authority towards the addressor, allowing for the creation of an authorial consciousness that provides orientation for the situation of the addressees.”⁶⁶ Doering also argues several Christian Diaspora letters “develop Jewish models and adapt them to suit a new readership.”⁶⁷ Further he notes the “remarkable ... differentiation in the geographical data, which corresponds to what we are able to see in some Jewish Diaspora letters (particularly in 2 Bar. 78–86 and in the Gamaliel letters).”⁶⁸ Thus, 1 Peter fits the genre of Diaspora letter since it fulfills all four characteristic of Diaspora letters listed above, though it is reworked for Christian purposes.

Given the vast area of the addressees, it is generally acknowledged that making definitive claims about the recipients is difficult.⁶⁹ Asia and Pontus-Bithynia had ports that opened these regions up to the influence of

61 E.g. Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 55. Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 14, was initially skeptical of the genre, but later said that there was evidence for it (“Palestinian Traditions in the Epistle of James” in *James the Just and Christian Origins*, ed. B. Chilton and C. A. Evans, NovT Sup. 98 [Leiden: Brill, 1999], 33–57). Wiard Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, THK 14 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001), 61–4, also does not think there is evidence for the genre type, in so far as James is also said to be a “Diaspora letter” as well (cf. Jas. 1:1).

62 Lutz Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters and the Beginnings of Christian Epistolography*, WUNT 298 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 430.

63 Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 431.

64 Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 431.

65 Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 431.

66 Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 431.

67 Lutz Doering, “First Peter as Early Christian Diaspora Letter,” in *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition*, ed. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009), 226.

68 Doering, “First Peter,” 230.

69 Ernest Best, *1 Peter*, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1971), 16; Michaels, *1 Peter*, xlv; Davids, *First Epistle of Peter*, 9; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 50; John H. Elliott, *1 Peter*, AB 37B (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 86, 90.

cultures from Italy, Greece, and Hellenized regions farther south.⁷⁰ Galatia and Cappadocia, however, did not have such easy contact with the West; they consisted of mountainous terrain and thick forest in which Hellenization made minimal impact.⁷¹ Elliot concludes, “The diversity characterizing these provinces historically, geographically, politically, ethnically, and culturally suggests the inevitable heterogeneity of the communities addressed.”⁷² It is significant that this one letter could be written to such a large area and be meaningful in spite of the area’s great diversity.

This letter was intended to circulate around these various regions because at least some of the recipients were suffering. The topic comes up repeatedly throughout the letter (1 Pet. 2:12; 3:9, 14, 16–17; 4:12–18; 5:10). Regardless of how widespread the suffering was that was caused by others, what unified the audience of the epistle was that they were Christians. It was this moniker, “Christian” (1 Pet. 4:16), used as a slur by those who caused the Christ followers of these regions trouble, that gave this epistle meaning to such a broad area.⁷³ First Peter, then, was written to encourage the Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor that they were part of an even larger community that had not forgotten about them (1 Pet. 5:9, 12–13).⁷⁴

GAC devotes little attention to 1 Peter. Bauckham says that because of its address, 1 Peter’s audience is too focused for what he envisions for the Gospels.⁷⁵ However, the diversity of the region to which it was addressed is a microcosm of the readership Bauckham envisions. To ignore the scale of an audience of this size as he does hurts his case. The diversity of the regions addressed in 1 Peter is similar to what the Gospels would have faced as they circulated from their places of origin.

70 Elliot, *1 Peter*, 86.

71 Elliot, *1 Peter*, 86.

72 Elliot, *1 Peter*, 90.

73 Elliot, *1 Peter*, 769: “A similar situation is assumed throughout the letter.... The fact that this letter is addressed to numerous communities dispersed across four provinces of Asia Minor may explain why the author reckons with the actuality as well as potentiality of Christian suffering, since conditions could vary from one locality to another.” See also, David G. Horrell, “The Label Χριστιανός (1 Pet. 4:16): Suffering, Conflict, and the Making of Christian Identity,” in *Becoming Christian: Essays on 1 Peter and the Making of Christian Identity*, ed. David G. Horrell, LNTS 394 (London: T&T Clark, 2013), 164–210.

74 F. J. A. Hort, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* 1:1–2:17 (London: Macmillan, 1898), 16: “Behind the visible stranger-ship and scattering in the midst of the world were the one invisible and universal commonwealth, of which the Asiatic Christians were members.”

75 See the discussion above, pp. 13–4.

1.2.2 James

The issues of authorship and date regarding the epistle of James are complex. On the one hand, some scholars affirm the traditional authorship based on the author's humble introduction (1:1),⁷⁶ the Jewish nature of the book,⁷⁷ the apparent pre-Gospel Jesus traditions (e.g. Jas 5:9 cf. Matt. 7:1; Jas. 5:12 cf. Matt. 5:34–7),⁷⁸ the lack of reference to Gentiles, and the lack of reference to the destruction of Jerusalem.⁷⁹ They also point to the studies of Sevenster and Hengel, who both argue that it was possible for Palestinian Jews to have excellent command of Greek.⁸⁰ On the other hand, Allison has critiqued these arguments, and presents a compelling case for the letter being a pseudapigraphon.⁸¹ Allison does say, however, that “the vagaries of our letter and the gaping holes in our knowledge allow different scholars to place James in different times and different places.”⁸² It is not my intention to settle this question here. My focus is on the recipients of the letter, and no matter when one dates the letter, he must say something about the recipients.

The epistle of James is addressed to “the twelve tribes in the Diaspora” (Jas. 1:1). This address is one of the most contentious in scholarship. The designation “twelve tribes” has been used to argue that James was writing to Jews alone,⁸³ Jews and Jewish Christians,⁸⁴ Jewish Christians alone,⁸⁵ Jewish

- 76 Patrick J. Hartin, *James*, SP 14 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 24; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James*, AB 37A (London: Yale University Press, 2005), 93.
- 77 Hartin, *James*, 24.
- 78 Hartin, *James*, 24; Johnson, *James*, 119; William F. Brosend II, *James & Jude*, NCBCE (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 6.
- 79 Hartin, *James*, 24; Brosend, *James and Jude*, 6.
- 80 J. N. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek?: How Much Greek could the First Jewish Christians Have Known?* NovTSup 19 (Leiden: Brill, 1968); Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, vol. 1; trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1974), 58–106. See for example Hartin, *James*, 23.
- 81 Dale C. Allison Jr., *James*, ICC (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 3–32. See also John S. Kloppenborg, *James*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis Fortress Press, forthcoming).
- 82 Allison, *James*, 13.
- 83 Adolf Schlatter, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1932), 90; Arthur T. Cadoux, *The Thought of St. James* (London: J. Clarke, 1944), 18; Richard J. Bauckham, *James: Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage*, NTR (London: Routledge, 1999), 14–16; John S. Kloppenborg, “Diaspora Discourse: The Construction of Ethos in James,” *NTS* 53/2 (2007), 244–50.
- 84 Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, ABRL (London: Doubleday, 1997), 728; A. S. Geyser, “The Letter of James and the Social Condition of his Addressees,” *Neot* 9/1 (1975), 27–9; James B. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, NICNT (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1976), 51; Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James*, NIGTC (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982), 64; Douglas J. Moo, *James*, TNTC (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity, 1985), 60; Ralph P. Martin, *James*, WBC 48 (Waco: Word Books, 1988), 11. Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 67; Allison, *James*, 131.
- 85 F. J. A. Hort, *The Epistle of St. James* (London: Macmillan, 1909), xxiii.

Christians and Gentile Christians,⁸⁶ and Gentile Christians alone.⁸⁷ Similarly, the designation “in the Diaspora” has proven contentious. It is believed by some to be a geographical marker of the locale of the recipients outside of Palestine⁸⁸ and by others to be a spiritual state of those away from their true home, heaven.⁸⁹

Allison cites seven texts that show that “Jews could speak of ‘Israel’ without qualification as scattered among the nations”: b. Pesah̄ 87b; Jub. 1:12–18; 4Q504 5:7–21; 2 Macc. 2:7; Ecclus 36:10; Tob. 13:2; Josephus *Ant.* 11.133.⁹⁰ He concludes that the terms indicate that the “twelve tribes” is an acceptable designation for Jews in the Diaspora because not even all of those scattered in the Judean Diaspora returned.⁹¹ Thus, he concludes that the letter was written for Jews.⁹² However, if we consider the texts discussed by Allison and expand the discussion to include texts he does not discuss, we find that his conclusions are not as secure as he seems to suggest. According to the texts of Ezra and Nehemiah, the twelve tribes returned (Neh. 7:7; Ezra 2:2). The authors know that the returnees are only from the Babylonian exile (Neh. 7:6; Ezra 2:1), but the returnees are referred to as Israelites without qualification. It is further indicated by the list of twelve leaders who lead the people back (Neh. 7:7; cf. the textually corrupt Ezra 2:2).⁹³ This is not to say that Allison is wrong. There were still members of the twelve tribes in the Diaspora, but it does complicate the picture. Israel could still be regarded as in exile since they were under foreign oppression, but that they were in the Diaspora is more contentious.⁹⁴ The *Letter of Aristeas* 39, 47–50, *Testament of Reuben* 6.8, *Testament of Joseph* 19.2–4 in addition to Ezra and Nehemiah, speak of the twelve tribes together in Palestine. It was more common, however, to speak of the ten (or nine and a

86 Kurt A. Richardson, *James*, NAC 36 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 55–6.

87 Holtzmann, *Einleitung*, 505; Hermann von Soden, *The History of Early Christian Literature*, trans. J. R. Wilkinson (London: Williams and Norgate, 1906), 470. James Hardy Ropes, *The Epistle of James*, ICC (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1916), 120–7. Joel Marcus, “‘The Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora’ (James 1.1),” *NTS* 60/4 (2014), 447.

88 Moo, *James*, 60; McKnight, *James*, 67.

89 Richardson, *James*, 56.

90 Allison, *James* 131, n.129.

91 Allison, *James*, 132.

92 Allison, *James*, 133.

93 On including the twelfth name in Ezra's account see Jacob M. Myers, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, AB 14 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965), 12.

94 Cf. Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 431: “In part for readers living in an ‘ongoing exile’ in the Land of Israel.”

half) tribes as still in the Diaspora but the two (or two and a half) restored.⁹⁵ Further, in 2 Macc. 2:7 and Sir. 36:10, the gathering of all the tribes does not indicate that *all* the tribes are scattered. It is an expression of the long-awaited hope of the return of all Israel, namely those who had returned and those who had not.⁹⁶

Other issues further complicate matters. The Tobit reference does speak of οἱ ὑιοὶ Ἰσραὴλ, but that does not necessarily mean all twelve tribes. First Kings 12:33; 19:10, 14; 20:27 and 2 Kings 13:5; 17:7, 9, 22 refers to the northern kingdom as בני ישראל (LXX οἱ ὑιοὶ Ἰσραὴλ) without distinguishing them from the southern kingdom. I find it difficult to believe that the Rabbis of b. Pesah̄ 87b believe that *all* Israel is scattered, since they lived in Palestine, and the same applies to 4Q504 5:7–21. Similarly, I do not think that the author of Jub. 1:12–18 believes all Israel is scattered given that he knows of the Maccabean rule (Jub. 32:1). Thus, we see that the references to the twelve tribes are not as secure as they might seem. In addition to the previous observation, it is also clear that early Christians shared Jewish messianic hopes (the restoration of the twelve tribes; Matt 19:28) and took for themselves Israelite titles (Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:7; 4:22–31; cf. 4 Macc. 18:23), including Diaspora (1 Peter 1:1). The combination of these two things—the uncertainty of the phrase “the twelve tribes” in Jewish literature and the Christian appropriation of Jewish titles—means that James cannot be shown to have in mind only Jews. If the Diaspora address does not help us identify the ethnicity of the recipients, it may be more helpful to examine what the Diaspora address indicates about the expected circulation.

James’ letter type, namely Diaspora letter, might offer some evidence that it was indeed expected to circulate to multiple communities. This aspect of Diaspora letters was noted above in the discussion on Diaspora letters in the section on 1 Peter.⁹⁷ Doering suggests that the nine and a half tribes addressed in the Epistle of Baruch (2 Baruch 77:19), is *pars pro toto* for the entire Diaspora community.⁹⁸ James’ address apparently is meant for an entire Diaspora community. However, a Diaspora address does not exclude a locale audience as well.⁹⁹ The Diaspora address leaves open the possibility of circulating to many

95 4 Ezra 13.40–1; 2 Bar. 78. 1–2 (nine and a half); Mart. Isa. 3.2 (nine and a half tribes); 1 En. 89.72; As. Mos. 3.4–7, 4.9; Jos. Ant. 11.133; m. Šabb. 10.1.

96 Cf. Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, AB 39 (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 422; Robert Doran, *2 Maccabees*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 63.

97 Pp. 46–7.

98 Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 243.

99 Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 243, 251.

communities. The contents of the letter do not narrow the audience any further. Doering says,

The paraenetic letter content, with the topics of temptation and trial, fits Diaspora letters well, particularly those of the Jeremiah-Baruch tradition. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr has pointed in detail to correspondence between these texts (and the introductory letters to 2 Macc) regarding Torah paraenesis, as well as their statements on God, the people of God, and expectations for the future.¹⁰⁰

It seems likely that the contents of the letter and the Diaspora addressees were chosen deliberately to facilitate the circulation of the letter. If the identification of James as a Diaspora letter, whether to an actual Jewish Diaspora audience or a spiritualized Christian audience, is correct, this would serve to corroborate that the text was expected to circulate to multiple locales.

1.2.3 Jude

The addressees of Jude are, like James's, enigmatic. The letter is addressed to "those who are called, beloved by God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ" (Jude 1). Some commentators, realizing that this address is vague, speak of Jude's audience broadly. Kelly argues Jude's audience was "Gentile Christian with a Greek cultural background."¹⁰¹ Davids includes "the whole sweep of the eastern Mediterranean where the Jerusalem leaders were revered."¹⁰² Some, however, have sought to build a specific community based on the contents of the letter.¹⁰³

At first glance there may be some merit to community reconstructions based on the contents of the letter. Jude certainly has in mind a specific group of people (Jude 4, 8, 10, 12, 16) that are set over against those whom Jude believes remain faithful (Jude 5, 12, 17, 20, 21, 24), but there is nothing that indicates the "intruders" (4) were limited to only one locale. The failures of the intruders are sexual immorality (7, 8, 10), slander (8, 10), rejecting authority (8), and causing division (8, 19). Such sins are frequently mentioned in NT letters (sexual immorality: 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:13, 18; 7:2; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3; slander: Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; 1 Tim. 6:4; division: 1 Cor. 11:10;

100 Doering, "First Peter," 227. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, "Der Jakobusbrief im Licht frühjüdischer Diasporabriefe," *NTS* 44/3 (1998): 432–42.

101 J. N. D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, BNTC (London: Black, 1969), 234.

102 Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Nottingham: Apollos, 2006), 22.

103 Brown, *New Testament*, 755; Brosend, *James and Jude*, 9.

11:18, 19; 12:25; Gal. 5:20). Given the vague address and the widespread nature of these issues, it is possible that the letter was expected to circulate to multiple locales. Schreiner concludes, “We must admit that we really have no way of knowing the letter’s destination. Nothing in the interpretation of the letter is based on its destination, nor do we know whether Jude wrote to one church or churches. In the commentary I will refer to Jude’s ‘church,’ but I do not mean to imply thereby that only one church is addressed.”¹⁰⁴ Here is a significant point in addition to the possible circulation of multiple locales. There is more evidence of a church or churches that exhibit a lack of distinct theological commitment within them. It is possible that this letter, like Ephesians and James, was expected to circulate to multiple locales, and because of that possibility it is relevant to the conversation.

1.2.4 Catholic Epistles Conclusion

First Peter was written to and circulated around a broad area. The regions were diverse, and yet the author intended his letter to circulate to all of the recipients because of their faith. First Peter, then, provides additional evidence of a letter written to multiple locales. James and Jude do not say where their audiences are located. The vague descriptions of audiences in James and Jude are of no help in concluding whether the recipients of the letters were in a single locale or in multiple locales, though James’s Diaspora address suggests circulation to multiple locales in keeping with the genre. It was this openness that made them relevant as they circulated. It is possible that the authors did this deliberately with the intention that they would circulate to multiple locales. First John, discussed in chapter 1 within the Johannine literature, standing within the tradition of the Johannine literature and with its lack of an addressee, has invited scholars to see it as circulating to multiple locales.¹⁰⁵

1.3 *Embedded Letters*

The letters to be discussed in this section are the seven letters in Rev. 2–3 and the Apostolic Decree in Acts 15:23–9. They also illustrate the reading of a text beyond a single locale. I begin with Revelation because it offers clear evidence that the seven letters were meant to be read in multiple locales. Whether the letter containing the Apostolic Decree circulated to multiple communities as narrated in Acts (15:23; 16:4; 21:25) is debatable (see below), but that it reflects the practice of circulating letters at the time of Luke’s writing can be assumed.

104 Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, NAC 37 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 410.

105 Pp. 16–8.

Further, these texts offer glimpses into the networks which existed for circulating texts.

1.3.1 Revelation 2–3

The seven letters were intended by the seer to be read by all of the other churches.¹⁰⁶ This is indicated by the command to write what he sees in 1:11 and 1:19 and send it to the seven churches (Rev. 1:11). It is also indicated by the repetition of the phrase “Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit says to the *churches*” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22) in each of the seven letters.¹⁰⁷ The author knew both the cities and the situation of the Christians in those cities.¹⁰⁸ Even though the letters were specific, the seer knew that the letters contained valuable messages for the other churches, and expected them to be read in the other churches as the text circulated. The seven letters of Revelation 2–3 offer more examples of texts with the situations of particular communities in view, but nevertheless were expected to be read in multiple locales.

These letters reveal a “strong social network between the churches, such that John could count on this document being passed from one to another and another, and so on.”¹⁰⁹ Ramsay has shown the importance of the road that connected these cities to their circulation.¹¹⁰ It facilitated communication and travel.¹¹¹ He argues that “the Christian church owed its growth and its consolidation under the early Empire to its carefulness in maintaining frequent correspondence,” and concludes that there “stands out before our view about AD 80, some kind of organization for connecting and consolidating the numerous churches of the Province of Asia.”¹¹² If the early Christians wrote letters to multiple communities, as I have argued above, it would not be surprising that networks existed by the end of the first century as Ramsay proposes.¹¹³

106 D. E. Aune, “The Form and Function of the Proclamations to the Seven Churches (Revelation 2–3),” *NTS* 36/2 (1990): 203; Ben Witherington III, *Revelation*, NCB (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 109.

107 George Eldon Ladd, *The Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 36; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation*, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1974), 72; Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 65.

108 E.g. W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1904), 269–70, 292–94, 329, 376–8, 405, 428–9.

109 Witherington, *Revelation*, 109.

110 Ramsay, *Letters*, 183–9.

111 Ramsay, *Letters*, 183, 184.

112 Ramsay, *Letters*, 189.

113 I will return to this below, pp. 128–31.

The correspondence ensured communication between the churches addressed and established networks. There is a glimpse of that process narrated in the passing on of the Apostolic Decree, to which I now turn.¹¹⁴

1.3.2 The Apostolic Decree (Acts 15:23–29)

The authenticity of the letter known as the Apostolic Decree is debated and has been debated at least since the fourth century. Ancient historians sometimes stated the accuracy of a letter with a prescript or postscript: “It was written as follows ...” (ταῦτα, τάδε), or “such was the letter.”¹¹⁵ They would also indicate that a letter had been paraphrased: “something like this” (τοιαῦτα, τοιάδε).¹¹⁶ In the textual tradition of Acts 15:23, these references about authenticity occur ⲛ² E L 33 81 323 945 1175 1241 1505 1739 M and sy^h add τάδε after the αὐτῶν in 15:23, and 1505 adds ταῦτα after τάδε. C D gig w sy^p and sa read ἐπιστολὴν διὰ χειρὸς αὐτῶν περιέχουσιν τάδε. Similarly, 614 and sy^{hmg} read, διὰ χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἐπιστολὴν καὶ πέμψαντες περιέχουσιν τάδε. These variants suggest that the writers believed the text of the letter to be a copy of an original letter. However, Ψ reads ἐπιστολὴν διὰ χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἔχουσάν τὸν τύπον τοῦτον, which suggest the scribe believed the letter was a paraphrase of the original. The evidence of the scribes above suggests that the majority viewed the letter as an authentic one that Luke reproduced. The majority of scholars today say the same.¹¹⁷

The Apostolic Decree was addressed to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. It needs to be pointed out that the discussion on Diaspora letters above is also relevant

¹¹⁴ Lincoln H. Blumell, “Mapping Christians: Travel and Epistolary Networks in Christian Letters from Oxyrhynchus,” in *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*, NTTSD 39 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 45.

¹¹⁵ Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 46.

¹¹⁶ Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions*, 46.

¹¹⁷ Although not all agree that the letter came from the Apostolic Council as narrated in Acts, Bruce, *Acts*, 299; Martin Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Heinrich Greeven, trans. Mary Ling (London: SCM, 1956), 107; C. S. C. Williams, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 2nd. ed. BNTC (London: Black, 1964), 185; Marcel Simon, “The Apostolic Decree and its Setting in the Ancient Church,” *BJRL* 52/2 (1970), 437; I. Howard Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles*, TNTC (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1980), 270; Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, trans. James Linburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 119; John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Acts*, 2nd. ed. BST (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1990), 240; Polhill, *Acts*, 334; Richard N. Longenecker, *Acts*, EBC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 246; C. K. Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 2, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 740; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 562; Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998), 450; Darrell Bock, *Acts*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 492 all think that it is a real letter.

here.¹¹⁸ Doering suggests that the Apostolic Decree is also a Diaspora letter meant to circulate to several scattered communities.¹¹⁹ First, he notes that the letter's prescript "develops ... form elements familiar from Jewish Diaspora letters," especially the use of "brothers" (Acts 15:23) to describe both the sender and the recipients (cf. the Passover Papyrus [AP 21 = TAD A4.1]; 2 Macc. 1:1).¹²⁰ In addition to this, Doering says that "the address geographically comprises parts of what counts as Diaspora in Jewish perspective."¹²¹ Further, he suggests the contents of the letter, which amount to administrative matters, argue strongly for it being a Diaspora letter (again cf. the Passover Papyrus [AP 21 = TAD A4.1]; 2 Macc. 1:1–10a).¹²² Luke, however, narrates the Decree spreading beyond that threefold audience in Acts 16:4 and the later reference in Acts 21:25 broadens the audience farther still.

These later references "imply a wider currency for the decree."¹²³ In Acts 16:4, Paul delivers the "decisions" from the council in Galatia but is unclear whether the author assumes Paul had a copy of the letter. In Acts 21:25, Luke, through James, says that a letter had been sent to the Gentiles who had come to believe. Thus, according to Acts, those who were involved in formulating the Apostolic Decree circulated it. The incident that precipitated the letter occurred in Antioch (Acts 15:1), but the letter is addressed to the whole province (Acts 15:23). They also circulated it to others (Acts 21:25). Even if they did not, it likely reflects common epistolary practice, and reflects Luke's feeling about the significance of the Decree.¹²⁴

In narrating the circulation of the decree beyond the addressed audience, Acts offers evidence of the way letters were believed to circulate. Some commentators argue that, because Antioch and Galatia were "mother church and daughter church," the church in Antioch felt compelled to share the contents of the letter with the churches of Galatia.¹²⁵ There is also the possibility of a person circulating letters on his or her own (cf. Acts 16:4). These are two different, but equally possible means of circulation, as we will see in the following chapter. A church that received a letter could pass on the letter to a church

118 See above, pp. 46–7.

119 Doering, "First Peter," 227.

120 Doering, "First Peter," 227.

121 Doering, "First Peter," 228.

122 Doering, "First Peter," 228.

123 Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, eds. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, vol. 4, *English Translation and Commentary* (London: Macmillan, 1933), 180.

124 Jacob Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, KEK 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 400, "Das Dekret gilt *nach Lukas* allen Nichtjuden in der Kirche" (italics added).

125 Bruce, *Acts*, 314, 323; Williams, *Acts*, 188.

with which it was in contact. It is also reasonable to suppose that a traveler who had read or heard a letter could have spread the contents of the letter in other locales.

2 Circulation to “All Christians”

In the previous section, we considered the expected circulation to multiple locales. This clearly shows that early Christian authors were capable of writing with the expectation that their texts would circulate beyond an isolated community. Below, however, we will consider texts that were expected to circulate to “all Christians.” These texts provide direct evidence supporting Bauckham’s claims for circulation to all Christians.

2.1 *The Shepherd of Hermas*

The Shepherd of Hermas contains instructions about how to circulate the book.¹²⁶ In Vision 2.4.3 Hermas is instructed to write two βιβλαρίδια and send one of them to Clement, who is then to send it “to outside cities.” Hermas is to read it “in this city” (2.4.3). Here we have one final example of literature deemed relevant for multiple locales, namely the city in which it was composed, Rome, and “outside cities.”

It has been traditionally assumed that the Clement mentioned in Vision 2.4.3 is the same as the author of 1 Clement.¹²⁷ This means, that since the Shepherd of Hermas is not as late as has been supposed (or at least this section is not),¹²⁸ it offers potentially valuable information for the circulation of the Gospels and epistles, which Bauckham rightly observes.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Hermas is not an example of epistolary literature, but it is significant for this discussion because it states its expected audience clearly.

¹²⁷ Carolyn Osiek, “The Genre and Function of the Shepherd of Hermas,” page 113–21 in *Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins, *Semeia* 36 (Decatur, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 114; James S. Jeffers, *Conflict at Rome: Social Order and Hierarchy in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 110; Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 109; J. Reiling, *Hermas and Christian Prophecy*, NovT. Supp 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 24 n.4. Lage Pernveden, *The Concept of the Church in the Shepherd of Hermas*, ST 27 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1966), 145, leaves the possibility open that the two are the same.

¹²⁸ Carolyn Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), argues that the Shepherd was written over a number of years (20). If the reference to Clement in Vision 2.4.3 is to the author of 1 Clement, Osiek argues that the issue of dating is not a problem, since the text was written over a long period (59).

¹²⁹ Bauckham, “For Whom?” 42–3.

Gamble says Clement might be described as an “ecclesiastical publisher.”¹³⁰ He believes that the reference to Clement is genuine, but says even if it is not, “The role assigned to him ... must have been comprehensible and was probably actually familiar to Hermas’s readers.”¹³¹ He concludes, “The regular activity this implies would not be particularly surprising, even at so early a time, especially in a large and influential Christian center such as Rome.”¹³² If Gamble is correct, then within about fifty years of Paul’s letters, Christians at least in Rome had created a position with the role of circulating texts.

Joel Marcus argued in his commentary on the Gospel of Mark that the Shepherd of Hermas, cited by Bauckham, actually argues against Bauckham’s position because “the work was intended first and foremost for the instruction of the leaders and members of the local churches in and around Rome.”¹³³ Marcus’s statement is partially true. A more accurate statement is that it was intended first and foremost for the instruction of the leaders and members of the local churches in and around Rome *and* outside cities, since this is what the text itself says (Vis. 2.4.3). One cannot ignore the fact that the text was intended to circulate to both from the beginning.¹³⁴ Indeed, when the elderly woman asks Hermas if he had given the book to the elders of the church in Rome and Hermas says that he has not, he is commended: “‘You have done well,’ she said, ‘for I have words to add. When, then, I finish all the words, they will be made known through you *to all the elect*’” (Vis. 2.4.2). He is then told how to make it known to “all the elect” in the sending of the copies to Grapte and Clement (Vis. 2.4.3). It is thus clear that both are in view. Even if we were to grant that the situation of the Roman church is in view throughout, it does not limit the circulation of that text to that individual community. This is not the either/or that Marcus makes it out to be. A text could have the situation of a community in view or be written from a particular community’s perspective, *but that does not mean that a text was expected to be read in that community alone*, as we have seen several times in this chapter already.

¹³⁰ Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 109.

¹³¹ Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 108–9. Polycarp is another such figure. He maintains contact with communities on behalf of Ignatius in order to spread the news of the peace at Antioch (Ign. Pol. 8.1). He had been in communication with the Philippians (Pol. Phil. 3.1), and he circulates the letters of Ignatius to them (Pol. Phil. 13.2).

¹³² Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 109.

¹³³ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:28.

¹³⁴ David E. Aune, “Hermas,” *EEC*, 421.

2.2 *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*

The Martyrdom of Polycarp is generally granted to have been written shortly after Polycarp's martyrdom in the middle of the second century CE, as the text seems to suggest (Mart. Pol. 18.1–3).¹³⁵ Important for my purposes is the address. The letter was sent to the church “in Philomelium and to all of the holy and catholic church sojourning in every place” (Mart. Pol. Inscript.). Buschmann calls this a “genuine letter” and includes it in the category of Diaspora letter.¹³⁶ It also contains an exhortation to circulate the letter to others in Mart. Pol. 20.1: “Therefore, after you have learned these things, send the letter to the brothers and sisters further on.” Again it is worth noting that these two elements are considered genuine and not additions to the text, since it shows that early Christian authors could and in some cases explicitly expected an all Christians audience.¹³⁷

2.3 *First Corinthians*

The final text to be considered is 1 Corinthians. In the address of the letter Paul writes, “to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who have been made holy in Christ Jesus, called to be holy, with all of those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, theirs and ours” (1 Cor. 1:2). Discussions rage about which noun the final two personal pronouns modify, whether “lord” or “place.”¹³⁸ Regardless of what the pronouns modify, there is clearly a reference to “every place” and “all who call upon the name of the Lord.”

This address has been controversial. The recent history of interpretation suggests that scholars do not take this to be a universal address.¹³⁹ Weiss goes

¹³⁵ Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, (LCL), 2:309; Francis X. Glimm, *The Apostolic Fathers*, FC 1 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947), 147; William R. Schoedel, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 5 (London: Nelson, 1967) 48; Jesse Hoover, “False Lives, False Martyrs: ‘Pseudo-Pionius’ and the Redating of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*,” VC 67 (2013), 472, all affirm that the body of the letter dates from shortly after the time of Polycarp's martyrdom. For a detailed discussion of the date of Polycarp's death, which is a matter of contention, see Sara Parvis, “The Martyrdom of Polycarp,” in *The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Paul Foster (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 126–46, who also affirms its proximity to Polycarp's death (146).

¹³⁶ Gerd Buschmann, “Martyrdom of Polycarp,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction*, ed. Wilhlm Prascher (Baylor: Baylor University Press, 2010), 144.

¹³⁷ Glimm, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 148; John Lawson, *A Theological and Historical Introduction to the Apostolic Fathers* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 167, 177.

¹³⁸ See, e.g. Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 77.

¹³⁹ E.g. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 33; Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995), 80; Raymond F. Collins,

so far as to suggest that the universal aspect in 1 Cor. 1:2 was added by a later editor, along with universal aspects in (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33).¹⁴⁰ Robertson and Plummer, followed by others, say, "This is generally connected simply with [the church] as if St. Paul were addressing the Corinthian Church along with all other Christians. But this little suits the individual character of this Epistle, which (much more than Romans, for example) deals with the special circumstances of one particular church."¹⁴¹ We have seen several times above, however, that Paul wrote letters primarily about the circumstances of a particular church while nevertheless expecting it to circulate to other locales. Further, we have seen that Paul expected several of his letters to circulate to multiple locales, including two throughout provinces. There is certainly a wide gulf between a text circulating through a province and a text circulating to any place that calls on the name of the Lord, but as we have seen, and will see, there is little that constrained ancient circulation.¹⁴² Additionally, the early church understood 1 Cor. 1:2 to refer to multiple locales.¹⁴³ Thus, there is no reason to deny the possibility of the circulation. It is this possibility that makes 1 Corinthians relevant to the discussion.

3 Conclusion

This chapter has showed that many early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales from the earliest stages of Christian writing. It would be surprising if the evangelists were unique. The evidence of Paul (and his circle) indicates that one of the early church's most prolific writers expected some of his letters to circulate to multiple locales. First Peter shows another early Christian leader in addition to Paul writing a letter that was

First Corinthinas, SP 7 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 53; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 28; Keener, *1–2 Corinthians*, 22; Robert Scott Nash, *1 Corinthians*, SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2009), 61; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2010) 57.

140 Johannes Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, KEK 9 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1910), 3.

141 Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *The First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1911), 2–3. Followed by Collins, *First Corinthians*, 53; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 28.

142 Schoedel, *Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 5, 51, connects the "in every place" in Mart Pol. Inscript to 1 Cor. 1:2, suggesting that both expressions anticipate "all Christian" audiences.

143 Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor. 1.2*. The Vulgate renders this passage "in omni loco ipsorum et nostro." See discussion in Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 77.

expected to circulate around many locales. James and Jude do not define their recipients with a specific locale, which could indicate that they expected their letters to circulate, though the Diaspora address potentially offers evidence for circulation to multiple locales.

The seer expected his letters in Rev. 2–3 to be read by all of the other churches. The Apostolic Decree offers evidence of another letter written to multiple locales. It also offers evidence of how letters might have circulated, be that circulation between churches (Antioch to Galatia) or through a person traveling to a different area who shared the contents of the letter. Either method is probably reflective of the practice at the time of Luke's composition.

Beyond these examples of circulation to multiple locales, there are explicit expectations for texts to circulate to "all Christians." Not only do the Shepherd and the Martyrdom Polycarp contain explicit statements expressing this expectation, but they make provisions for it. The text is to be given to Clement who will send it out (Vis. 2.4.3) in the case of the Shepherd, and those in Philomelium were to pass it on after they had read it (Mart. Pol. 20.1), as we had seen in Col. 4:16. It is also at least possible that 1 Corinthians 1:2, in addition to containing a reminder to the Corinthians about their small part in the larger Christian world, does expect some circulation to that wider Christian world. Its earliest commentators understood it that way, and some commentators today agree. It is possible then, that one of the earliest Christian texts written already expected circulation to "all Christians." The fact that the Shepherd and 1 Corinthians are primarily about the situations of single locales should not matter. We have already seen this multiple times in letters that were expected to circulate to multiple locales (e.g. Colossians, 2 Corinthians, and the seven letters of Revelation 2–3). As noted above, the circulation of the text to other churches by an individual, as seems to be the case in Vision 2.4.3, also reflects the possibility that there was a role established early in the church's history to communicate with other churches and circulate literature.

One final objection might be noted concerning the letters that were not discussed. Paul, after all, wrote Philemon, and Paul or one of his disciples wrote the Pastorals and 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The elder wrote 2 and 3 John. These are all ostensibly letters to individuals. I say ostensibly because, in fact, Philemon is addressed also to "the church in your house" (Philem. 2). It is also the case that it is not clear that the "elect lady" of 2 John 1 is a woman.¹⁴⁴ It could be a church since she and her sister have children (2 John 4, 13). Of course, women do have

144 So, for example, I. Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 10; Schnackenburg, *The Johannine Epistles*, trans. Reginald and Ilse Fuller (Spring Valley, NY: Crossroad, 1992), 273.

children, so it is possible that these are two sisters, but it is the possibility that they are churches that makes them relevant to our discussion. The addressee is not clear. Furthermore, a that an early Christian leader wrote personal letters or a letter to a single church would not be surprising. Many personal letters of church leaders and letters to individual churches have come down to us from antiquity and even the modern period. "The letter genre," after all, "does enable a particularity of address to specific readers to an extent that no other ancient literary genre does."¹⁴⁵ Bauckham is certainly right about that. However, that does not mean *every* letter is addressed to so narrow an audience, as we have seen throughout this chapter. That the Thessalonian letters, the Pastorals, and 3 John are in the canon is a question of circulation after reception (the focus of the next chapter) and canonicity, which runs beyond the bounds of this book.

When we compare the expectation of circulation to multiple locales in early Christian to the expectation of circulation to multiple locales by other ancient authors, we see that other ancient letter writers expected that their letters would circulate to multiple locales as well. I have already discussed Diaspora letters above. Following Doering, I said that they give the impression of circulation to multiple locales and that this impression must have some basis in reality. Below, I extend this to other ancient letter writers, and the letters of one of Rome's most prolific letter writers, Cicero, and his friends.

Cicero circulated several of his letters beyond their initial recipients, which suggests circulation to multiple locales, and on occasion this is evident in the letters (*Att.* 3.9; 8.2, 11b, 11d; 9.11a; 13.26, 27; 14.13b, 17a; 15.14; 16.16). For example, *Att.* 8.11 is a letter from Cicero to Atticus in Rome. Appended to that letter are letters from Cicero in Formiae to Pompey in Luceria (*Att.* 8.11b) and from Cicero still in Formiae to Pompey now in Canusium (*Att.* 8.11d) both of which are, to reiterate, sent to Atticus in Rome. Additionally, there is scenario similar to *Nebenadressat* evidenced in Cicero's letters as well. Cicero sends a letter that is to be sent to Caesar to Atticus to get his opinion and the opinion of Atticus's friends as to whether Cicero should send it to Caesar (*Att.* 7.51; 8.1, 27). While Atticus and his friends are not the geographical *Nebenadressat* (that is, they are not in the same locale as Cicero), they "overhear" the letter, so to speak, and offer input and continue conversation with Cicero, the author of the letter (*Att.* 8.27). As a final example, when Atticus tells Cicero that a letter Cicero wrote to Caesar was circulating widely, Cicero responds, "I am not sorry that the letter I wrote is circulating widely. I myself gave away many copies" (*Att.* 8.9). We see in *Att.* 8.9 that Cicero facilitated the circulation of his letter. He clearly

¹⁴⁵ Bauckham, "For Whom?" 27 n.30.

wanted it to circulate, and again this circulation occurred in multiple locales where Caesar was and in Formiae where Cicero was. From this brief survey, we see that there is some evidence for the circulation of letters to multiple locales both in Jewish and non-Jewish sources in the first centuries BCE and CE. This gives added warrant to our identification of the expected circulation of texts to multiple locales by early Christian authors, since there is evidence of the practice of circulating texts to multiple locales in the ancient world.

Given the examples of the *expectation* of circulation to multiple locales found in early Christian literature, Jewish literature, and evidenced in the letters of Cicero, there is warrant for suggesting that the evangelists might have expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales or indeed “all Christian” audiences as well. It would be in keeping with ancient authorial practice of circulating texts, and early Christian authorial practice in particular. It would be surprising if the evangelists were different. I turn to the *actual* circulation of texts in the following chapter. In it, I will show that early Christian texts, Gospels and letters, circulated beyond their initial locales. This circulation beyond the initial locales shows that early Christians did not view the generic distinction as meaningful in terms of the circulation of texts.

Actual Practice of Early Christian Circulation

I did not reckon that the letter I had sent to Calvus would get out any more than the one you are now reading. I scratch out a letter when I think it will be read by the person to whom it is sent, and I write a polished draft when I think it will be read by many.

CICERO, *Fam.* 15.21.4



In the previous chapter, I showed that many early Christian authors *expected* texts to circulate to multiple locales, ranging from two nearby towns (e.g. Col. 1:1; 4:16) to intra and inter province (e.g. Gal. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:1, respectively) to all Christians (Vis. 2.4.3; Mart. Pol. Inscript.). Thus, I suggested that there was a possibility that Gospel authors expected similar, multi-locale audiences. The quotation that opens this chapter gets at the heart of a related but other matter: the circulation of a text beyond its initial audience. In the above example, Cicero does not appear to be upset that the contents of the letter have circulated *per se* but is upset that a poor draft has been circulated. What it illustrates is the lack of control authors had over their texts after it left their hands in the ancient world, as discussed in chapter one. As we will see in this chapter over and over again, early Christians circulated their epistles beyond their initial locales. They were not alone in handling their epistles this way.

Again, I turn to Cicero to demonstrate this phenomenon. Twenty-six times Cicero circulates a letter he received to Atticus (*Att.* 8.1, 11a, 11c, 15; 9.6, 6a, 7a, 7b, 11, 12, 13, 13a, 15, 16; 10.3a, 8a, 8b, 9a; 13.38; 14.13a; 15.6, 14, 28, 29; 16.12), and at one point Atticus sent a letter in which he was the recipient to Cicero (*Att.* 1.17). These are very simple instances of the circulation of letters, but there are several examples from Cicero's letters that reveal a more complex circulation. *Att.* 9.7c is a copy of a letter Caesar wrote to Oppius and Cornelius, which Caesar passed on to Balbus. Balbus appended this letter to his letter to Cicero (*Att.* 9.7b). Cicero appended both letters (and a third written to him by Balbus and Oppius, *Att.* 9.7a) to his letter to Atticus (*Att.* 9.7). The same situation can be seen in *Att.* 9.13a. Balbus copied a letter from Caesar to Oppius and

Cornelius into his letter to Cicero that he had gotten from Caesar, and Cicero then sent this collection to Atticus (*Att.* 9.13). In both cases the letters from Caesar addressed to Oppius and Cornelius were passed from Caesar to Balbus, from Balbus to Cicero, and from Cicero to Atticus. A shortened version of this circulation is seen in *Att.* 9.14. Quintus Pedius sent his letter from Caesar to Cicero, who sent the letter to Atticus. It is unclear how the author would regard the news that his letter had circulated. One suspects that Caesar would be glad to know that Balbus had circulated his letter on peace to Cicero (*Att.* 9.13a), but furious to find out that Quintus Pedius had sent Cicero the letter saying that Caesar was trying to blockade Pompey (*Att.* 9.14). After receiving both letters, Cicero concludes that Caesar is talking out of both sides of his mouth but knows for certain that the side proclaiming war is the truth (*Att.* 9.14). In another instance, Cicero is glad to find out that Caesar had circulated a letter Cicero had written to Caesar (*Att.* 8.2). However, Cicero is troubled to find out that his letter to Calvus had been circulated (*Fam.* 15.21.4). All of this circulation beyond the initial audience discussed above and that to be discussed below shows that the lack of control an author had over his or her text was not limited to books, as discussed in chapter one. Here, then, we are faced with a key observation: the circulation of both letters and other texts beyond their initial audiences shows that, in the ancient world, the generic distinction did not matter insofar as it relates to circulation beyond the initial audience.

That early Christians circulated their texts beyond their initial audiences is as uncontroversial a claim as could be made in New Testament studies. But it is the implication of this circulation that is valuable. It shows that early Christians, like others in the ancient world, did not view the generic distinction as making a difference to circulation. Additionally, circulation beyond the initial audiences shows that early Christians did not live in isolated communities. These two observations complement the previous chapter on expectations.

Hurtado and Gamble have both suggested that early Christian communities were—in my terminology—“open” based on much of the evidence that will be discussed below. Hurtado concluded this on the basis of manuscripts in Egypt,¹ and Gamble, discussing various kinds of evidence, argued similarly.² The goal of this chapter, then, is to show that not only did early Christian authors *expect* their text to circulate to multiple locales, but that the early Christians engaged in the *actual practice* of circulating texts beyond their addressed audiences.

1 Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2006), 41.

2 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 95–143, for his conclusions see 142–3.

I will note on several occasions in this chapter where we have clear evidence that *practice* matched *expectations*. This suggests that we should think other instances of expected circulation to multiple locales were matched by practice, even if we do not have clear evidence. This chapter will examine this wider circulation in a number of phenomena: 1) transmission; 2) catholicizing tendencies; 3) letter collections; 4) manuscripts; and 5) allusions.

It is necessary to explain these categories before proceeding since the first term, “transmission,” conceivably could be viewed as a “catch-all” term for the other four. By “transmission” I mean direct statements that clearly show circulation beyond the addressed communities or in some cases the non-addressed communities, which suggests they had already circulated beyond the addressed communities. “Catholicizing tendencies” will examine two aspects. First, it will look at circulation beyond addressed audiences through the practice of eliminating the addressed audiences so that the text would be relevant to an outside community. The practice of catholicizing letters, in addition to eliminating the addresses, also eliminated some of the particularizing aspects of an epistle to make it relevant for other, outside communities. Second, it will look at statements made by early Christians to justify the reading of particular texts in locations other than the original destination. “Letter collections” show, in a similar manner to the catholicizing tendencies, that the letters were recognized as having wider significance for other churches. Additionally, the very act of collecting letters necessitated the circulation of texts beyond the addressed communities. The existence of “manuscript remains” in Egypt show that a number of texts circulated beyond their initial audiences, and we have the proof of that circulation in the manuscript remains. “Allusions” do not prove that later Christian authors had the physical texts that they allude to, and thus only indirectly attest to a letter’s circulation. But, as we will see, the overwhelming evidence of circulation beyond their initial locales suggests that it is likely that they do attest to a letter’s circulation beyond its initial community, and thus they deserve to be a part of the discussion.

1 Transmission

1.1 *Polycarp to the Philippians*

Polycarp’s letter to the *Philippians*, written in the first quarter of the second century CE, reveals a number of interesting aspects concerning the practice of early Christian letter circulation. First, it is explicitly stated to be in response to a request made by the Philippians for Ignatius’s letters (Pol. *Phil.* 13.2). We will

see below other examples of the exchange of texts being requested through letters.³ It is not particularly difficult to explain the origin of the request. Ignatius had been in Philippi (Pol. *Phil.* 9.1) and was likely the one who told the Philippians about the letters. Second, it appears that the Philippians assumed that Polycarp had or would have been able to get the other letters easily: “We sent to you the letters sent to us and as many others as we had with (or near) us” (Pol. *Phil.* 13.2).⁴ Regardless of when Polycarp received the letters, this involves an aspect of the circulation of texts from their original, non-Smyrnaean addressees to Polycarp either from Ignatius or through Polycarp’s own energies.⁵ Even if Ignatius gave Polycarp copies of the letters, this would still constitute circulation beyond the initial audience because Polycarp and Smyrnaean church were not the intended addressees of the other four (or five) letters. The author facilitated the circulation. The ease with which the Philippians believed their request could be met suggests that the practice of circulating letters to other locales was already a common practice and that the necessary connections existed to facilitate such circulation.⁶ Even if they did not exist, however, they could be made through the sending of a letter or an envoy with a request like the one alluded to here.⁷ The third, and final, aspect to be noted is the actual act of circulation itself. Polycarp sent the requested letters to the Philippians: “[The requested letters] are appended to this one” (Pol. *Phil.* 13.2). Here we have clear evidence of the actual circulation of these early Christian writings from one locale to another, or better from their intended addressees around Asia Minor to Smyrna (for those letters not addressed to Smyrna), and then from Smyrna to Philippi.

3 Pp. 96–7; 132.

4 Paul Hartog, *Polycarp and the New Testament: The Occasion, Rhetoric, Theme, and Unity of the Epistle to the Philippians and its Allusions to New Testament Literature* (WUNT 2/134; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 85: “The Greek construction clarifies that the Philippians had requested both Ignatius’ letters written directly to Smyrna and any of his other letters Polycarp had available.”

5 Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch* (London: Continuum, 2007), 146, offers a compelling reconstruction of Polycarp getting Ignatius’ letters written from Smyrna directly from Ignatius, though it remains equally possible that Polycarp reached out to the churches of Ephesus, Tralles, Magnesia, and possibly Rome on his own. Given *Romans* unique textual transmission, distinct from the other six, it is unclear if it was originally included in Polycarp’s collection (Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 146).

6 We will return to networks and connections in the following chapter.

7 See the discussion below on Polycarp’s social network on p. 126.

1.2 *Martyrdom of Polycarp*

The colophons of Mart. Pol. 22.2–3 potentially reveal the copying and circulation of the letter. These short notes, especially Mart. Pol. 22.3, have caused a certain amount of uncertainty concerning the historicity of the practice they describe. They say:

²Gaius, who was a fellow citizen of Irenaeus, copied these things from the copy of Irenaeus, who was a disciple of Polycarp. And I Socrates wrote in Corinth from the copies of Gaius. Grace be with everyone. ³And again, I, Pionius, wrote from the previously mentioned copies after searching for them—on account of a vision revealed to me by the blessed Polycarp, as I will make clear in the sequel—by gathering them together now when they were worn out by time, so that the Lord Jesus Christ might gather me also with all his chosen ones in his heavenly kingdom, to whom be the glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever, amen.

MART. POL. 22.2–3

Mart. Pol. 22.3 is the primary reason for this uncertainty. The Pionius referred to in the text is generally taken to refer to the famous Christian martyr who lived in the middle of the third century.⁸ However, few accept that this colophon was actually written by Pionius because of a “presumed link between *MPol.* 22 and the opening chapter of a spurious *Life of Polycarp*, sections of which are clearly datable to the post-Nicene era.”⁹ The link between the two texts has been questioned, and thus, the historicity of the account in the final colophon might be rehabilitated.¹⁰ Even if the final colophon is seen to be late, however, there is no reason to deny the accurate portrayal of the practice of copying in Mart. Pol. 22.2. A number of scholars have supported the historicity of Mart. Pol. 22.2, even if they have not supported the claim of 22.3.¹¹ As Gamble says, even if the final colophon is late, it does not “discredit” Mart. Pol. 22.2.¹² Mart. Pol. 22.2, then, offers evidence of circulation to at least two locales, namely Lyons and Corinth.¹³

8 So, Hoover, “False *Lives*, False Martyrs,” 473.

9 Hoover, “False *Lives*, False Martyrs,” 473. For those who see a link between Mart. Pol. 22 and the *Life of Polycarp* see, Hoover, 473 n. 8.

10 Hoover, “False *Lives*, False Martyrs,” 476–86.

11 See, Hoover, “False *Lives*, False Martyrs,” 482 n. 40.

12 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 115.

13 Kim Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 81, takes the reference to Pionius to be a genuine reference to another copyist, and so another locale. In light of the

We can discuss, then, the circulation of the text based on the two places named in Mart. Pol. 22.2. Gaius, the first copier of the letter mentioned, is said to have been a “fellow citizen” of Irenaeus, and that he copied it from an exemplar in Irenaeus’s possession (ταῦτα μετεγράψατο ... ἐκ τῶν Εἰρηναίου; Mart. Pol. 22.2). Thus, we see that the text had circulated to Lyons before the end of the second century and was copied there perhaps before the end of the second century CE.¹⁴ Gaius’s copy was, apparently, then sent to Corinth, where a certain Socrates made a copy of it (Mart. Pol. 22.2). We can trace then the circulation of the text from Philomelium, where it was addressed, to Lyons, and then to Corinth.¹⁵ Here we have evidence of a text that was intended to circulate to all Christians actually circulating.

In this section, I have shown various pieces of evidence of the circulation of letters beyond their initial locales. First, I showed Polycarp’s circulation of letters in the request made by the Philippians for Ignatius’s letters and Polycarp’s response with the letters. Then I showed that the scribal colophons at the end of the Martyrdom of Polycarp showed the circulation of the letter beyond Philomelium to (at least) Lyons and Corinth. This is, as I suggested above, only one phenomenon of the circulation of literature beyond their initial audiences.

2 Catholicizing Tendencies

The second phenomenon that demonstrates circulation can be seen in catholicizing tendencies. In the first part of this section I will be examining the ways texts were edited by early Christians and statements made by them to facilitate their relevance to Christian communities to which the letters were not addressed. In the second part, I will be examining the way in which Christians discussed and justified the use of particular texts in communities to which they were not written. These explanations implicitly demonstrate circulation, for there would be no dilemma if the texts were read only in the addressed communities. Additionally, the very act of circulation reveals a perceived notion

difficulties associated with this personage, I do not extend the process that far. However, nothing is lost, in terms of the present argument, in not doing so because the text has already been shown to have circulated.

14 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 115–6.

15 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 114, suggests that the command “to send the letter to the brothers and sisters beyond” (Mart. Pol. 20.1) means that the Philomelium church was to send the letter to churches east of Philomelium, while the church at Smyrna would send the letter to churches to the west. Regardless of how it got to Lyons, it is clear that it circulated beyond its initial addressees.

of catholicity on the part of those who circulated the epistles, because they thought that these texts were relevant to, or at least should be read by, others.

2.1 *Romans*

The textual history of Romans seems to suggest strongly that the letter was deliberately edited to facilitate circulation beyond the initial audience. The lack of the short phrase “in Rome” in Romans 1:7, 15 is recorded in Codex Boernerianus (G; late ninth century)¹⁶ and in Origen’s commentary on Romans (ca. 246 CE).¹⁷ While Origen’s commentary on these verses comes down to us only in Rufinus’s translation, it is clear that they were not in Origen’s text. We see this initially in the comment on 1:7, “The blessing of peace and grace is given to those beloved of God to whom the apostle Paul wrote” (Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 1.8.1). Noticeably absent is any mention of the Romans, though Rufinus’s Latin lemma of Romans 1:7 includes the phrase “in Rome.” This omission is best explained by suggesting that Rufinus used a Latin translation for his lemmata, but followed Origen’s commentary on Rom. 1:7, which was based on Origen’s Greek lemma that lacked mention of the Romans.¹⁸ This suggestion is confirmed by observations in Codex 1739, which clearly indicate that the phrase “in Rome” was not present in Origen’s text.¹⁹

Further, Gamble has persuasively argued that these omissions “belonged initially to the fourteen-chapter form of the text.”²⁰ That is to say, a fourteen-chapter form of the letter was deliberately circulated without the phrase “in Rome” in 1:7, 15 to churches outside of Rome. His arguments are based primarily on the fact that the “Pauline bilinguals,” codices Boernerianus (G), Claromontanus (D; sixth century),²¹ and Sangermanensis (E; late ninth century),²²

16 Alexander Reichardt, *Der Codex Boernerianus: Der Briefe des Apostels Paulus* (Leipzig: Karl W. Hiersemann, 1909), 9.

17 Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 446–7. For further witnesses and discussion see Harry Gamble, Jr., *The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans*, SD 42 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 29–33. On the dating of Origen’s commentary see Thomas P. Scheck, “Introduction,” in *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans Books 1–5*, FC 103 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 1.

18 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 31. However, Origen clearly knew the traditional addressees (Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 1.7.1).

19 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 31.

20 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 32–33.

21 F. C. Burkitt, “On Codex Claromontanus,” *JTS* 4/16 (1903): 588.

22 Albert W. Van Buren, “The Text of Columella: Including a Collation of Codex Sangermanensis, for Lib. XI, and a Collation of Codex Ambrosianus, for the First Part of That Book.” *Supplementary Papers of the American School of Classical Studies in Rome* 1 (1905): 157.

omit the reference to Rome in 1:7, 15 and attest a fourteen-chapter version of Romans together as a distinct form of the text.²³ He notes that a critical mark in Codex Claromontanus (D) before *in* in the Latin translation (the Greek column is lost), suggests a correction to the text *qui sunt Romae in caritate Dei* in Rom. 1:7.²⁴ Codex Sangermanensis (E), a copy of Codex Claromontanus (D), reads: τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ/ *qui sunt Romae*.²⁵ This implies that the text critical mark called for an omission. These points lead Gamble to conclude:

The uncorrected text of D does not represent the text of the bilingual edition which is shown by G to have lacked the reference to Rome. The reading of [the corrected text of D] is shared by a large number of old Vulgate witnesses ... and is clearly the result of an attempt to adapt the shorter reading ... Therefore, we may conclude that all MSS which in Rom. 1:7 read ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἐν ἀγάπῃ θεοῦ/*Romae in caritate (dilectione) Dei* thereby betray the omission of the Roman address at some point in their ancestry.²⁶

The omissions of the phrase “in Rome” (Rom. 1:7, 15), the travel plans (Rom. 15:22–29), and the greetings (Rom. 16:3–16) remove the “Roman” aspects of the text.²⁷ Significantly, for my purposes, this form of Romans circulated widely. The variant readings and short forms are attested in Europe (The Amiatine *capitula*, codices Fuldensis [F],²⁸ Claromontanus [D], Sangermanensis [E], Boernerianus [G]) and the East (Origen).²⁹ Gamble also suggests that Tertullian knew of a fourteen-chapter form of the letter.³⁰ However, this is an argument from silence.³¹ If Tertullian did know a fourteen-chapter form of the letter, then we could extend this circulation to Africa as well. The earliest evidence we have of the circulation of this form of the text is Origen. Thus, by (at least)³²

23 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 33.

24 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 30.

25 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 30.

26 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 30.

27 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 33, followed by Eugene Harrison Lovering Jr., “The Collection, Redaction, and Early Circulation of the Corpus Paulinum” (Phd. diss., Southern Methodist University, 1988), 145.

28 For a discussion on these two texts see Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 16–8.

29 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 33.

30 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 33.

31 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 20–1.

32 If Tertullian did know a fourteen-chapter form of the letter, this form of the letter would have been circulating by the late second or early third century CE.

the mid-third century Paul's letter to the Romans was circulating "not as an epistle to the Romans, but as a catholic epistle of the apostle Paul."³³

2.2 *Catholicizing Justification*

In spite of the letters' particularity, it is precisely through the lens of catholicity that the early church came to view Paul's epistles in and because of their circulation. The Muratorian canon says, "Since the blessed apostle Paul himself following his predecessor, John, wrote to seven churches by name only, in this order ... Yet, although he wrote twice to the Corinthians and Thessalonians for reproof, nevertheless there is made known one church spread over the whole face of the earth" (Muratorian canon 48–57)³⁴ and Tertullian says, "Of what significance are the titles, since in writing to a certain church the Apostle in fact wrote to all?"³⁵ These explanations found in the Muratorian canon and Tertullian are probably attempts to rationalize the reading of Paul's letters in churches to which they were not addressed.³⁶ And it was not Paul's letters alone that were viewed this way. The Muratorian canon says about the seven letters of Revelation: "For John also in the Apocalypse, though he writes to

33 Nils Alstrup Dahl, "The Particularity of the Pauline Epistles as a Problem in the Ancient Church," *Notestamentica et patristica. Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag überreicht*, NovTSup 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 268. On p. 267, Dahl has suggested that the removal of "in Ephesus" represents a similar catholicizing process. See, however, my discussion on the circulation of Ephesians on pp. 114–6 above as to why it is unlikely that this was a later change to the text. Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 4, has similarly argued that the phrase "with all those who call upon the name of the Lord in every place" in 1 Cor. 1:2b was a generalizing addition. Similarly, Dahl, "Particularity," 270, suggests that the variant readings in 1 Cor. 1:2b show that either "Corinth" was omitted and was reintroduced in the wrong place or that the two were regarded as alternative readings. Most recent scholars have not followed Weiss and Dahl on this point, considering instead that Paul was reminding the Corinthians that they stood alongside Christians throughout the world. E.g. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 23; Fee, *First Corinthians*, 33 n.24.

34 The dating of the canon has been debated extensively. See discussion of the debate in Eckhard J. Schnabel, "The Muratorian Fragment: The State of Research," *JETS* 57/2 (2014): 239–53. In short, while several scholars, especially Geoffrey M. Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon*, Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); idem, "The Muratorian Fragment and the Origins of the NT Canon," in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 405–15, have argued against the initial and traditional second-century date of the text, "the majority of reviews, essays, and comments in monographs have been critical" of alternative dates (Schnabel, "Muratorian Fragment," 245).

35 *PL* 11, 545A, translation Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 117.

36 Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*, 117.

seven churches, nevertheless speaks to all" (Muratorian canon 57–60). It was the problem created by the circulation of particular letters to particular locales to other locales, which is itself a catholicizing practice, that brought about the practice of removing local markers and justifying the reading of Pauline epistles and the seven letters of Revelation.³⁷ This is not to suggest that the letters were interpreted apart from their original exigencies in other instances. Those are discussed in the Muratorian canon (42–6). This further makes my point that interpretation and circulation are separate matters. Nevertheless, the act of circulating the letters shows that early Christians saw these particular texts to have a wider relevance than their initial audiences.

This can also be seen in the letters of Dionysius of Corinth. Writing around the mid to late second century CE, Dionysius wrote seven letters to churches in Lacedaemonia; Athens; Nicomedia; Gortyna and "the rest of the congregations of Crete;" Amastris and those in Pontus; Knossos; and Rome (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.2–9). He also wrote two letters to individuals, Pinytus, a bishop of Knossos, and a woman named Chrysophora (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.8, 13 respectively). It is worth noting that Dionysius's letters add further evidence to the previous chapter that early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales since he addresses letters to congregations in Crete and Pontus. However, for the purposes of this chapter, it is important to see that these nine letters to specific churches and people came to be called "catholic letters": "And first, one must indeed say about Dionysius that he was entrusted with the bishop's seat of the congregation in Corinth, and he shared abundantly his inspired labors not only to those under him, but also with those who were in foreign lands, and he made his greatest service to all in the catholic epistles he wrote to the churches" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.1). As Gamble notes, the only way to explain the calling of these letters catholic "lie[s] not in the addressees of the letters but in the history of their circulation and transmission."³⁸ That is, these letters came to be called catholic because they were circulated beyond their initial addressees. Eusebius says that Dionysius' letters were a service "to all." While the "all" is undoubtedly exaggerated, it appears, according to Eusebius, that the letters had circulated to a significant audience beyond their initial addressees.

Catholicizing tendencies can be seen in the circulation of Romans beyond Rome, not simply its circulation but its alteration to facilitate its relevance in other communities. Thus, Christians not only circulated their texts but at

37 Dahl, "Particularity," 261–71.

38 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 116.

least on one occasion edited their text to facilitate its circulation. If it could be confirmed that Eph. 1:1 was also part of this activity, we would have more evidence for the practice. Christians also justified their reading of texts in other locations by emphasizing their letters' catholicity, in spite of their letters' particularities. These justifications reveal that the early church was engaged in the practice of circulating texts to communities beyond those to which they were written, and in the very act of circulating they reveal that early Christians believed their letters to have had a wider relevance. Finally, in Eusebius's description of Dionysius letters as catholic and their service "to all," I suggested that Dionysius's letters to specific communities were circulated to churches beyond those to which they were addressed.

3 Letter Collections

The very existence of a collection of Pauline letters shows the circulation of texts to other locales, since the emergence of a collection (or collections) suggests that letters were circulated with the result that a collection came to be formed. Below I will discuss views on the collection of Pauline letters and the formation of a corpus, but for now it needs only to be noted that collections demonstrate circulation beyond their initial audiences.

3.1 *Second Peter*

Perhaps the earliest reference to a clear collection of Paul's letters is in 2 Peter 3:16.³⁹ The author of 2 Peter refers to things Paul says in "all his letters" (2 Pet. 3:16). Which letters that collection includes is unknown, but it is clear that the author knows of a collection, whatever its size.⁴⁰ Neither are we told how the author acquired the letters, but "[t]he catholic destination of the Pauline epistles could be assumed without polemics and without any specific motivation."⁴¹ This verse also seems to indicate that the recipients of the letter

39 On a collection of Paul's letters, see Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1983), 330–1; Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, AB 37 C (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 249–50. About the date of 2 Peter, Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158, says, "[The] evidence, though it is inevitably dependent on other dates which are very much in dispute (e.g. those of 1 Peter and Jude), seems to point to a date for 2 Peter in the period 75–100, though on this evidence an early second century date cannot be entirely excluded."

40 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 250.

41 Dahl, "Particularity," 265.

likewise also have access to some collection of letters as well.⁴² At the very least they have heard that Paul had written multiple letters.

3.2 *Ignatius Ephesians*

Ignatius's letter to the *Ephesians* (ca. 110 CE) also reveals knowledge of a Pauline collection of letters. Ign. *Eph.* 12.2 says, "Paul ... who in every letter mentions you in Christ Jesus." The first point to notice is the phrase "every letter." It indicates knowledge of more than one letter. Ignatius qualifies the phrase "every letter" with a reference to Paul mentioning the Ephesians. Typically, scholars take this reference to be an exaggeration on Ignatius's part.⁴³ However, Foster has recently put forward the idea that Ignatius is not exaggerating, but is showing us which letters were known to him, namely the letters in which Paul mentions Ephesus or the Ephesians: 1 Corinthians; Ephesians; 1 Timothy; and 2 Timothy.⁴⁴ It may very well be that there was a two- or four-letter Pauline collection (depending on when one dates 1 and 2 Timothy) at Antioch by the early second century CE, but to suggest a two- or four-letter corpus in Antioch as being anything beyond a possibility is to run too far, especially since Schoedel points to other early Christian examples of similar hyperbolic statements, which suggests it was not an uncommon early Christian practice.⁴⁵ Foster's suggestion is an intriguing hypothesis, but does not discount Ignatius' possible knowledge of other Pauline letters. That we do not know precisely what letters Ignatius knew is not ultimately a problem, since neither do we know what letters made up the collection in 2 Peter. That it is not a problem is all the more evident for my purposes, since the very mention of letters show that he knew of several letters.

3.3 *Marcion*

From the middle of the second century CE, we have an identifiable collection of Pauline letters. According to Tertullian, Marcion's *Apostolikon* consisted of Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Romans, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians,

42 Michael J. Kruger, "Early Christian Attitudes toward the Reproduction of Texts," in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 66.

43 E.g. Cyril C. Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers*, LCC 1 (London: SCM, 1953), 91 n.28; William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 73 n.7.

44 Paul Foster, "The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch and the Writings that later formed the New Testament," in *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Andrew F. Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 163–4, 185.

45 Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 73 n.7.

Ephesians (Laodiceans), Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon.⁴⁶ This collection leads to a question: “Where did Marcion get this collection of letters?”⁴⁷ Did he have them in his native Pontus or in Rome or somewhere else? Harnack thought that Marcion “held the basic features of his teaching” while in Pontus.⁴⁸ He argued, however, that Marcion produced his “authentic” text of the Gospel and of Paul’s epistles in Rome, since “they [the texts] are based upon the text that is more strongly attested for us in Rome and the West than in the East.”⁴⁹ Dieter Roth has recently argued based on observations made by Ulrich Schmid that Marcion’s text of the *Apostolikon* is “pre-Western.”⁵⁰ Significantly, as Schmid points out, Marcion’s text “is a witness to a text form common to Marcion, the Western text, and the (an) old-Syriac text.”⁵¹ In light of the realization that Marcion’s texts cannot be definitely located on the basis of the textual tradition, since as Schmid says, “diese Heilige Schrift aber zu einem Teil in dieser Form schon längst vor Marcion ... existierte und auch kirchlich rezipiert wurde,”⁵² it is perhaps best to argue, like Ehrman, that these texts were those “that he had in his church,” wherever that church was.⁵³ That is, since this text form was circulated in the church broadly, it is not necessary for my purposes to establish where Marcion got these letters.⁵⁴ It is enough to note that they circulated beyond their initial audiences.

3.4 *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*

The earliest evidence we have of Christians in the Roman province of Africa comes as a report about the martyrdom of twelve individuals in 180 CE. Within that short account there is a mention of a Pauline letter collection. The relevant

46 Here following the order of Tertullian as he discusses Marcion’s omissions, *Marc.* 5.2–21 (ANF 3:733–821).

47 This question assumes that Marcion did in fact receive the collection of letters and was not in fact the first to have collected them. For a defense of this position see: Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos*, 284–98.

48 Adolf Harnack, *Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God*, trans. John E. Steely and Bierma, Lyle D. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 16.

49 Adolf Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, trans. James Moffat, 2nd. and rev. ed., vol. 1 (London: Williams & Norgate, 1908), 17.

50 Dieter T. Roth, “Marcion and the Early New Testament Text,” in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 306.

51 Roth, “Marcion,” 306, summarizing Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos*, 280. See also Günther Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles*, SchL (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), 230–41.

52 Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos*, 308, italics original.

53 Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 106.

54 Roth, “Marcion,” 304.

part of the account reads: “Saturninus the proconsul said: ‘What things are in your case?’ Speratus said: ‘Books and letters of Paul, a just man’” (Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs §§19–20).⁵⁵ It is unclear what letters they had, but it is clear that there were multiple. Significant about this corpus of letters is that it was presumably in Latin. Metzger and Vööbus both suggest that the rural Scillitans were unable to read Greek and conclude that the Pauline letters must have been in Latin.⁵⁶ If this is the case, then it is important that not only was there a collection of Paul’s letters in this village but that there was a Latin translation of Paul’s letters available by the late second century CE, and probably slightly earlier. This Latin translation is significant because it shows the circulation of the text not simply beyond its initial audience, but to an audience that was not able to read the text in the language it was originally written. This shows that some texts were being circulated widely.

3.5 *Papyrus 46*

Lastly, P⁴⁶, a collection of letters from Egypt from around 200 CE,⁵⁷ shows the circulation of Paul’s letters to Egypt. The collection consisted of Romans, Hebrews, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, and 2 Thessalonians.⁵⁸ We see, then, that these of Paul’s epistles and Hebrews had circulated beyond their audiences to Egypt.

From these various collections we have clear evidence of the circulation of letters. Unfortunately, not all of them tell us which letters were in the corpus, and thus, which letters circulated. Regardless, it is clear from the letter collections and the catholicizing tendencies discussed above that “from an early time ... the letters of Paul began to be known and read outside of the churches to which they were originally sent.”⁵⁹ Furthermore, it is worth noting the breadth of the circulation that these corpora reveal. Paul’s letters circulated to regions as far as Syrian Antioch, Egypt, and Scillium in North Africa. Not only were the letters copied and circulated to form these collections, but in the case of the

55 Line numbers from J. Armitage Robinson, *The Passion of S. Perpetua* TS 1/2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), 114, translation mine.

56 Arthur Vööbus, *Early Versions of the New Testament: Manuscript Studies*, Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile 6 (Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1954), 285; Bruce M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission, and Limitations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 289.

57 Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 37.

58 Metzger, *Text*, 37. That 2 Thessalonians was probably included in the collection (since it is absent from the manuscript) see, Frederic G. Kenyon, *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri: Pauline Epistles and Revelation*, vol. 3 (London: Emery Walker, 1934), vi.

59 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 99.

collection in Scillium, they were possibly also translated in order to facilitate the reading of those who (presumably) could not or struggled to read the letters in Greek. This is a testament to the literary activity of the early Christians in circulating their texts to other communities, and specifically the circulation of texts beyond the communities to which the texts were addressed.

Before proceeding it is worth pausing to consider modern scholarly discussion concerning the formulation of the Pauline corpus. There are a number of different theories as to how Paul's letters came to be collected: 1) "gradual circulation"; 2) "lapsed interest"; and 3) "personal involvement."⁶⁰ All of the theories, regardless of how one judges them as models for the development of the Pauline collection, make the same point: early Christians circulated Paul's letters beyond their initial audiences.

Those who hold to theories of gradual circulation argue that circulation occurred from the beginning.⁶¹ Zahn argues that the initial circulation of the letters to communities to which they were not addressed occurred locally, like in Col. 4:16: "Was in einem urkundlich bezeugten Falle geschehen ist, daß zwei benachbarte Gemeinden, welche gleichzeitig Briefe des Paulus erhalten haben, auf den Wunsch des Verfassers selbst dieselben gegen einander austauschten."⁶² He goes on to say that this practice "kann und wird sich öfter wiederholt haben."⁶³ This "gradual exchange" would have built up small, incomplete collections among communities that "had an interest in Paul and his teaching."⁶⁴ Eventually from these small collections came one large collection.⁶⁵ There are several important aspects to Zahn's observations. The first is that neighboring churches were in communication.

One has only to think back to the addressees discussed in the previous chapter to see that he is correct. *The expected circulation implies connected communities. The practice of circulation shows the reality of those connections to outside communities.* This is not simply the case for Zahn's hypothetical reconstruction

60 The language of "lapsed interest" and "gradual circulation" come from Arthur G. Patzia, *The Making of the New Testament*, 2nd. ed. (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011), 130, 133, respectively. The language of personal involvement is taken from Stanley E. Porter, "When and How was the Pauline Canon Compiled? An Assessment of Theories," in *The Pauline Canon*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Pauline Studies 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 113.

61 The theories themselves originate with Theodor Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Deichert, 1889), 811–39; and Adolf Harnack, *Die Briefsammlung des Apostels Paulus und die anderen vorkonstantinischen christlichen Briefsammlungen* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1926), 6–27.

62 Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 830.

63 Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 830.

64 Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 830, translation mine.

65 Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 830.

but is demonstrated in all of the evidence of circulation we have seen above and will see below.

The second significant aspect of Zahn's observations follows from the first: it is through these connections that Pauline corpora came to exist. If one is pressed to look for a reason why a church might share its letter, Lovering suggests a probable reason: "The content of some of Paul's letters and the continuing apostolic 'presence' those letters made possible in the churches would, from an early date, have provided the occasion for public reading and at least limited circulation of the letters."⁶⁶ Whatever more Paul might have meant in 1 Cor. 5:3, at the very least he is present in his letter.⁶⁷ The statement in 1 Tim. 4:13 about public reading, which possibly includes Pauline letters,⁶⁸ might suggest the continued use of Pauline letters. However, even if it does not, the statements made by Clement and Polycarp to "take up" (1 Clem. 47.1) and "study" (Pol. *Phil.* 3.2) suggest that these letters did not fall out of use. Instead, they were circulated and read by other communities, probably not long after they were read by the addressed communities.

Goodspeed's theory of "lapsed interest," contrary to the gradual collection theory, begins with the basic premise that Paul's letters did not circulate beyond their initial audiences immediately:

In the first place, we must clear our minds of the instinctive notion that from the time of their composition Paul's letters circulated freely and generally among the churches.⁶⁹

A few of them were preserved, and, especially after his martyrdom, were probably read sometimes in the meetings of the churches *to which they had been written*. But for the most part they lay in the church chests little used.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Lovering, "Collection, Redaction," 342–3.

⁶⁷ So, William Wrede, *Paulus*, RGG 1/5–6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1907), 40. See a discussion on the nature of Paul's "presence" in Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 391; Jane M. F. Heath, "Absent Presences of Paul and Christ: *Enargeia* in 1 Thessalonians 1–3," *JSNT* 32/1 (2009): 3–38.

⁶⁸ George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 207; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, AB 35A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 252; Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 317, all note that Paul expected his letters to be read in the gathered community (e.g. Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27), though stop short of definitively saying whether or not the Pauline letters were in mind in 1 Tim. 4:13.

⁶⁹ Edgar J. Goodspeed, *New Solutions of New Testament Problems* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1927), 2.

⁷⁰ Goodspeed, *New Solutions*, 3, italics added.

It must also be remembered that no church had more than one or two of the letters of Paul, as we know them, from which to form an estimate of their worth.⁷¹

However, this situation of disuse was “suddenly replaced by their wide currency.”⁷² According to Goodspeed, these letters “unknown to the writer of Acts” became “well known to the writer of the Revelation at Ephesus, the writer of Hebrews, *probably in the west*, and the writers of 1 Clement and 1 Peter at Rome.”⁷³ It is significant that this collection of letters becomes known in various places around the Empire, because it shows the practice of circulation to other locales. Further, according to Goodspeed, one early Christian’s work would have a significant impact on the rest of early Christian practice: “After the publication of Paul’s collected letters, in fact, Christian instruction finds expression in a shower of church letters and encyclicals, all more or less influenced and even shaped by the collected Pauline letters.”⁷⁴ That is, Christian authors in the locales that received the Pauline collection were inspired to write in ways similar to Paul or alluding to Paul after they received his letter collection. While there is much that may be, and has been, criticized about Goodspeed’s approach,⁷⁵ his theory shows the circulation of Paul’s letters to communities beyond those addressed.

More recently Trobisch has suggested that Paul was the first to publish a corpus of his letters.⁷⁶ According to Trobisch, most ancient letter collections “originated with the author of the letters.”⁷⁷ That collection was then published.⁷⁸ For my purposes, it is enough that, according to Trobisch’s theory, these letters, collected by the author, were published, since their publication as a corpus

71 Goodspeed, *New Solutions*, 3.

72 Goodspeed, *New Solutions*, 3.

73 Goodspeed, *New Solutions*, 3–4, italics added.

74 Goodspeed, *New Solutions*, viii. It is also worth noting that the Pauline letter collection only influences later letters and encyclicals. No other texts appear to have been as neglected as the Pauline epistles according to Goodspeed. Acts was published (apparently) widely, for it causes “a revival of interest in Paul ... especially in those *churches* about the Aegean” (4, italics added). He goes on to say that “*one church after another* would be reminded that it possessed a letter of Paul” (4, italics added). In the same volume, Goodspeed suggests that Matthew used Mark (116, italics added), which suggests the circulation of Mark. That is to say, the Gospels, or at least Mark, and Acts had no difficulty circulating. That the collection of Paul’s letters was undertaken by an individual see Goodspeed, *New Solutions*, 4.

75 See a summary of critiques made against this position in Porter, “When and How?” 105–7.

76 David Trobisch, *Paul’s Letter Collection* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 54.

77 Trobisch, *Paul’s Letter Collection*, 50.

78 Trobisch, *Paul’s Letter Collection*, 51, takes this for granted: “If this publication was a success ...”

means that they were read by those in other locales than those to which they were sent. Thus, his theory coheres with my argument. For Trobisch, Paul's initial collection consisted of only four letters, namely Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Galatians.⁷⁹ This initial collection made up the "first stage" of the Pauline collection.⁸⁰ In the second stage, according to Trobisch, "unpublished" (meaning unpublished to the general public) letters were collected and were published (to the public) either with the original collection if sufficiently related or as a new volume.⁸¹ Again, with the second stage, we see more letters being circulated and read by those who were not the intended audiences. "Scribes try to produce manuscripts containing all known letters" in the final stage according to Trobisch.⁸² Ultimately, we see the letters being circulated and read by multiple communities to which the letters were not addressed in every stage of Trobisch's development.

There is much that remains a mystery about the collection and circulation of Paul's letters in the late first century CE. As we have seen in the examples above, there are several theories. At the moment, it appears that Trobisch commands the support of many scholars, albeit with caveats.⁸³ Regardless of how one believes a Pauline corpus into existence, however, it is clear that the formation of a corpus or corpora must include circulation beyond initial audiences.

4 Manuscripts

The final phenomenon to be discussed that clearly demonstrates the circulation of texts beyond their initial audiences are manuscripts. Above, we have seen examples of circulation narrated in texts (e.g. Pol. Phil. 13.2) and in references to Pauline collections (e.g. 2 Pet. 3:15), but in the manuscripts discussed below, we have the physical evidence of circulation beyond initial audiences. A number of manuscripts from the second and third centuries CE have been found in Egypt, including Paul's letters (P³² P⁴⁶), The Shepherd of Hermas (P.Oxy. 4706; P.Oxy. 3528; P.Mich. 130); and Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*

79 Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection*, 54.

80 Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection*, 50–1.

81 Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection*, 51.

82 Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection*, 51.

83 He is followed by and Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 100–1 and Gerd Theissen, *The New Testament: A Literary History*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 94–101, in theory, even if not in detail. Stanley E. Porter, "When and How?" 117–21, makes several critical objections, but seems convinced that Paul or one of his coworkers initiated the collection (126–7).

(*P.Oxy.* 405), among others.⁸⁴ This small list will suffice for my purposes, as it is broadly illustrative of the pattern of the circulation of texts in Egypt, including (what would become) canonical texts and (what would become) extracanonical texts. $\P^{46}$, as discussed above, shows that Paul's letters had circulated to Egypt by the late second or early third century CE and that they had done so as a corpus.⁸⁵ P.Mich 130, a copy of the Shepherd, has been dated to the third quarter of the second century CE.⁸⁶ This date suggests that the Shepherd, which was completed around the middle of the second century CE,⁸⁷ had circulated to Egypt almost immediately after it had been written, or at least not very long after it was written.⁸⁸ Blumell has also suggested that *P.Oxy.* 4706, another copy of the Shepherd dating from the late second or early third century CE, was similarly circulated shortly after the composition of the text.⁸⁹ This seems to indicate that the circulation intended in the text (Vis. 2.4.3) came to fruition.⁹⁰ Additionally, Roberts has suggested that *P.Oxy.* 405, a copy of *Against Heresies* (ca. 185 CE),⁹¹ should be dated to the late second or early third century CE.⁹² Once again, then, we see evidence of the circulation of a text to Egypt shortly after it was composed. These material remains lead Hurtado to conclude, "Enough survives to tell us that *collectively early Christians produced, copied, and read a noteworthy range of writings.*"⁹³ By "range" Hurtado

84 For a list of the texts known by manuscript evidence see Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 20.

85 Jens Schröter, *From Jesus to the New Testament: Early Christian Theology and the Origin of the New Testament Canon*, trans. Wayne Coppins, SEC (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013), 310.

86 Colin H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt*, SchL (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), 22. So also, Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 27.

87 On the date see: Graydon F. Snyder, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 6 (London: Nelson, 1968), 24; Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas*, 20; David Ivan Rankin, *From Clement to Origen: The Social and Historical Context of the Church Fathers* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006), 34. That the Shepherd was composed over a period of time see Osiek, *Shepherd*, 20; and Rankin, *From Clement to Origen*, 34.

88 Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 27.

89 Lincoln H. Blumell and Thomas A. Wayment eds, *Christian Oxyrhynchus: Texts, Documents, and Sources* (Baylor: Baylor University Press, 2015), 209.

90 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 109, calls it "systematic dissemination" rather than "random circulation." Such a claim probably goes too far. Vision 2.4.3 refers only to Clement sending the text to "outside cities" which may either be accomplished through systematic processes or through random circulation. Regardless, the text circulated, as it was intended.

91 T. C. Skeat, "Irenaeus and the Four Gospel Canon," *NovT* 34/2 (1992): 194.

92 Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief*, 23. So also, Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 27.

93 Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 24, italics added.

seems to imply “theological range,” which is certainly true,⁹⁴ but it is not wrong to include a geographical meaning as well. The manuscripts in Egypt reflect texts written from across the theological spectrum of early Christianity and written from Christian locales across the Roman Empire.

It is highly likely that the manuscript evidence found in Egypt is broadly reflective of the type of circulation of the early church. As Hurtado suggests, “There is no reason to suspect that we are dealing with aberrant Christians behind the fragments from Oxyrhynchus and other Egyptian sites.”⁹⁵ Indeed, if we include the other types of evidence of circulation discussed above, then it is almost certain that the circulation habits on display in Egypt reflect the wider practice. We have seen evidence of the catholicizing of Romans, almost undoubtedly done to facilitate circulation to locales outside of Rome. Lastly, the collections of letters, known in (probably) Rome, and Antioch and Scillium further attest to this practice. It is clear, then, that the manuscript remains in Egypt are in all likelihood representative of the Christian practice. This practice shows a “wide translocal outlook.”⁹⁶

A special feature of Christian manuscripts is the use of *nomina sacra* in them. *Nomina sacra* are “certain words that were written in a special abbreviated form ... in order to set them apart as sacred.”⁹⁷ The earliest most consistent four words abbreviated were Ἰησοῦς, χριστός, κύριος, and θεός.⁹⁸ Other words were abbreviated early but with less frequency and still others were abbreviated later and with even less consistency.⁹⁹ The list of words and why they came to be abbreviated are not my chief concern.¹⁰⁰ I want to highlight the fact that they appear “widespread across languages and regions.”¹⁰¹ They “appear in Greek, Latin, Coptic, Slavonic, and Armenian sources, including

94 Manuscript remains show evidence of texts from what would become canonical, apocryphal and other early Christian texts. See Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 20–4.

95 Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 26.

96 Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 27.

97 Michael J. Kruger, “Manuscripts, Scribes, and Book Production within Early Christianity,” in *Christian Origins and Greco-Roman Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, *TENTS* 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 29.

98 Kruger, “Manuscripts, Scribes, and Book Production,” 30.

99 For a list of these other two categories see Larry W. Hurtado, “The Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: A Proposal,” *JBL* 117/4 (1998): 655–6.

100 For a discussion on the origin of *nomina sacra* see discussion in Kurt Treu, “Die Bedeutung des Griechischen für die Juden im römischen Reich,” *Kairos* 15 (1973): 123–144; Hurtado, “Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*,” 655–73; See especially Tomas Bokedal, *The Formation and Significance of the Christian Biblical Canon: A Study in Text, Ritual and Interpretation* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 93–7.

101 Kruger, “Manuscripts, Scribes, and Book Production,” 30.

manuscripts, inscriptions, amulets, and icons ... down to the Middle ages.”¹⁰² Significant about this wide usage (apart from the fact that they appear in many regions, to which I will return) is that the four earliest can be found in the earliest manuscripts we have, dating from the middle to late second century CE.¹⁰³ On the basis of a reference to the *nomen sacrum* for Jesus (Iη) and the symbol of the cross, the Greek letter Tau (T), in *Barnabas* 9.7–9 (ca late first or early second century CE), Bokedal says, “*Nomina Sacra* ... may have been employed by Christian scribes by the time the Fourth Gospel was written, and probably even earlier.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, we see that there is evidence for the early use of *nomina sacra*. The early use of *nomina sacra*, as I noted above, was apparently common in various regions, since it can be found in Greek, Latin, Coptic, Slavonic, and Armenian sources. Significant about the use of *nomina sacra* in *Barnabas* 9.7–9 is that he expects his readers to know what he is talking about.¹⁰⁵ Further, the scribe who wrote P⁵² likely used *nomina sacra*.¹⁰⁶ In this case, we likely have a scribe who used *nomina sacra* expecting his readers to know what they meant. Given the evidence we have of this practice “in Christian biblical manuscripts, noncanonical religious texts (e.g., the Egerton Gospel fragment), and in ‘orthodox’ and non-orthodox Christian writings (e.g., the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*, *Acts of Peter*, *Acts of John*).” Hurtado concludes, “This indicates a remarkable instance of standardization that contrasts with the wide diversity we have come to associate with the earliest centuries of Christianity.”¹⁰⁷ Bokedal says similarly, “To judge from our second- and third-century Bible manuscripts, [the system of *nomina sacra*] quickly found *universal* acceptance among the regional churches.”¹⁰⁸ In light of these observations, it seems likely that Kruger is cor-

¹⁰² Hurtado, “Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*,” 656.

¹⁰³ Hurtado, “Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*,” 657.

¹⁰⁴ Bokedal, *Formation and Significance*, 103. The reference to the time of the writing of FG comes from the possible use of Iη (=18), the *nomen sacrum* for Jesus, as early Christian gematria equal with the Hebrew word for life יח (=18) in John 20:30 suggested by Hurtado, “Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*,” 667. However, as Hurtado, “Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*,” 667, notes, the use of this Jewish gematria “is not explicitly attested in sources early enough to serve as a background for earliest Christian groups.” Although this use of gematria in John 20:30 remains a possibility, it should only be treated as such.

¹⁰⁵ Following Bokedal, *Formation and Significance*, 106: “The specific meaning of the three letters may already be known by the readers.”

¹⁰⁶ Christopher M. Tuckett, “P⁵² and *Nomina Sacra*” *NTS* 47/4 (2001): 544–8, has challenged the use of *nomina sacra* in P⁵². Charles E. Hill, “Did the Scribe of P⁵² use the *Nomina Sacra*? Another Look,” *NTS* 48/4 (2002): 587–92, has made the case that the scribe did use it.

¹⁰⁷ Hurtado, “Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*,” 658.

¹⁰⁸ Bokedal, *Formation and Significance*, 88–9, italics added.

rect to suggest that there was a “highly organized network” and “collaborative structure” for the copying and actual circulation of early Christian texts.¹⁰⁹ In light of this, it is important to observe that the practice of scribes, their writing and circulation habits, do not fit the common views of theologically distinct, isolated communities Gospel scholars put forward.

5 Allusions

Discussion of allusions of New Testament texts in later, early Christian texts has been a common component of the discussion of the transmission of early Christian literature.¹¹⁰ Their significance for my argument must be made clear. On the one hand, some allusions and references appear to be very clear indications of knowledge of a given text. On the other hand, allusions and references rarely, especially in the earliest Christian literature, offer unambiguous evidence of authors having a physical text before them. That is, it is rare for early Christian authors to make explicit statements about the physical manuscript to which they are referring. Thus, a reference might indicate that an early Christian author was copying from a text, but it might also be that the author remembered a text that he heard in another place. Nonetheless, allusions might prove knowledge of a text, and thus possibly the circulation of a text. Given all of the evidence of circulation above it would not be surprising if these allusions demonstrate the circulation of texts, but they remain only a possibility, however likely, of that practice. In what follows, I will examine a few representative early Christian texts from various regions of the Roman

¹⁰⁹ Kruger, “Manuscripts, Scribes and Book Production,” 33, 34, respectively.

¹¹⁰ E.g. Helmut Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den Apostolischen Vätern*, TU 65 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1957); Donald Alfred Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome*, NovTSup 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1973); Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 21–24; Andreas Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum*, BHT 58 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1979); Wolf D. Köhler, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums in der Zeit vor Irenäus*, WUNT 2/24 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987); Jean-Marie Sevrin ed., *The New Testament in Early Christianity, Colloq 36* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989); Edouard Massaux, *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature before Irenaeus*, trans. Norman J. Belval and Hecht, Suzanne, NGS 5/1 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990); Elliott, *1 Peter*, 138–148; Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews*, AB 36 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 19–24; Andrew F. Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period before Irenaeus*, WUNT 2/169 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Charles E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Empire, focusing on only those letters that seem most assured of being referenced, and thus might best suggest circulation.¹¹¹

5.1 *First Clement*

It appears that the author of 1 Clement knew several New Testament texts. Clement, to use the traditional author's name, seems to know 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, and Romans. That Clement knows 1 Corinthians is seemingly certain since it is based on his direct reference to the letter (1 Clem. 47.1–3; cf. 1 Cor. 1:12–17; 3:22). It seems likely that these statements reveal the circulation of Paul's letter to Corinth on to Rome. It is reasonable to suppose that Clement was as able to “take up the letter of the beloved apostle Paul” (1 Clem. 47.1) as the Corinthians were. It seems especially the case here, where Clement tells the Corinthians “truly” what Paul taught (1 Clem. 47.3).¹¹² The appeal to and apparent use of 1 Corinthians suggests that Paul's letter had circulated to Rome.

There is also a possibility of Clement's knowledge of several texts beyond 1 Corinthians. The first in order of likelihood is Hebrews. There are hints that Clement knows Hebrews in 1 Clem. 36.1.¹¹³

1 Clem. 36.1

Hebrews 2:18; 3:1

Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν ἀρχιερέα τῶν
προσφορῶν ἡμῶν, τὸν προστάτην καὶ
βοηθὸν τῆς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν.

2:18 ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεὶς,
δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι
3:1 Ὁθεν, ἀδελφοὶ ἅγιοι, κλήσεως
ἐποθρανίου μέτοχοι, κατανοήσατε τὸν
ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας
ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν

Jesus as the one who “helps” might be a reference to Heb. 2:18, though it may also be a reference to Isa. 49:8. The stronger reference is the identification of Jesus as the High Priest in Heb. 3:1. Such a conceptualization of Jesus is first explicitly recorded in Hebrews. The hint appears further confirmed by another, much more apparent allusion in the following paragraph.

¹¹¹ For a full discussion of New Testament texts known to early Christian authors see: A Committee of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology, *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (New Testament; Oxford: Clarendon, 1905); Andrew F. Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett eds., *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Below, *NTAF* and *RNTAF*, respectively.

¹¹² So also, Jack Finegan, “The Original Form of the Pauline Collection,” *HTR* 49/2 (1956): 85.

¹¹³ Words in **bold** show verbatim agreement. Words that are in *italics* are the same word but in a different form. Words in ***bold-italics*** are synonymous.

1 Clem. 36.2

ὅς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς μεγαλωσύνης
αὐτοῦ τοσοῦτω μείζων ἐστὶν ἀγγέλων,
ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον ὄνομα
κεκληρονόμηκεν.

Heb. 1:3–4

ὅς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χα-
ρῆς τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, ...
τοσοῦτω κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν
ἀγγέλων ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτοὺς
κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα

The verbal agreements in the second reference appear to suggest knowledge of Hebrews.¹¹⁴ The other text that is apparently known to Clement is Romans, but knowledge of the letter to the Romans in Rome would not be surprising and would not constitute circulation to another locale. The same would hold true for Hebrews if the letter to the Hebrews was written to Rome, which is a position that is becoming a scholarly consensus.¹¹⁵ If Hebrews was written to Rome, then the clearest evidence we have is that 1 Corinthians had circulated from Corinth to Rome. If Hebrews was not written to Rome, then both Hebrews and 1 Corinthians had circulated to Rome. There are other possible references to New Testament letters in 1 Clement, but they are not as clear as those above, since in the other cases there is not enough overlap (linguistically or conceptually) to determine dependence or there is possible influence from the Hebrew Bible or common early church tradition that makes determining dependence difficult.¹¹⁶

5.2 *The Letters of Ignatius*

Ignatius' letters show allusions to several New Testament letters with one important caveat: Ignatius appears to have referred to all of these letters from memory.¹¹⁷ This is chiefly explained by the fact that Ignatius was a prisoner. Since he appears to refer to these letters from memory, it looks as if Ignatius did not have copies of New Testament letters with him as he traveled under Roman guard. If this is correct, it is important because it means that Ignatius

114 A. J. Carlyle, "1 Clement," in *NTAF*, 44.; Andrew F. Gregory, "1 Clement and the Writings that later formed the New Testament," in *RNTAF*, 152, both rate this as an A. I use "verbal agreement" in the same way it is used in discussions on the Synoptic Problem to note similarities between texts. See, for example, David J. Neville, *Arguments from Order in Synoptic Source Criticism: A History and Critique*, NGS 7 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1994).

115 So also, Alan C. Mitchell, *Hebrews*, SP 13 (Collegville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 7.

116 See discussion of these allusions in Carlyle, "1 Clement," 37–58; Gregory, "1 Clement and Writings," 142–54.

117 So, W. R. Inge, "Ignatius," in *NTAF*, 64.

appears to have acquired his knowledge of these texts in Antioch, and thus they show the circulation of letters to Antioch. If he did have letters with him, which he either brought with him from Antioch or got from Smyrna (or Troas), it would still suggest the circulation of letters beyond their initial audiences, since there are no New Testament letters addressed to either of those other two destinations.

Ignatius' strongest references are to 1 Corinthians and Ephesians. The overwhelming number of references to 1 Corinthians suggests Ignatius' knowledge of the letter.

Ign. *Eph.* 10.3

τίς πλέον ἀδικηθῇ, τίς ἀποστερηθῇ

1 Cor. 6:7

οὐχὶ μάλλον ἀδικεῖσθε; διὰ τί οὐχὶ
μάλλον ἀποστερεῖσθε;

Ign. *Eph.* 16.1

1 Cor. 6:9

Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, ἀδελφοὶ μου: οἱ
οἰκοφθόροι βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ
κληρονομήσουσιν.

Ἦ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἄδικοι θεοῦ βασιλείαν
οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν; μὴ πλανᾶσθε: οὔτε
πόρνοι οὔτε εἰδωλολάτραι οὔτε μοιχοὶ
οὔτε μαλακοὶ οὔτε ἀρσενοκοῖται

Ign. *Eph.* 18.1

1 Cor. 1:23

ὁ ἐστὶν σκάνδαλον τοῖς ἀπιστοῦσιν,
ἡμῖν δὲ σωτηρία καὶ ζωὴ αἰώνιος

ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμέ-
νον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, ἔθνεσιν δὲ
μωρίαν, αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς, Ἰουδαίοις
τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν
καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν

Ign. *Eph.* 18.1

1 Cor. 1:20

ποῦ σοφός; ποῦ συζητητής

ποῦ σοφός; ποῦ γραμματεύς; ποῦ συζητη-
τῆς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου;

These are the clearest allusions to 1 Corinthians in Ignatius' letter to the Ephesians,¹¹⁸ but there are several other very strong references in his other let-

¹¹⁸ The parallel in Ign. *Eph.* 18.1/1 Cor. 1:23 might seem tenuous but it appears that Ignatius is drawing on Paul's scandal to outsiders/benefits to insiders' motif. The bold is an attempt

ters (Ign. *Magn.* 10.2//1 Cor. 5:7; Ign. *Trall.* 2.3//1 Cor. 4:1; Ign. *Trall.* 5.1//1 Cor. 3:1–2; Ign. *Rom.* 5.1//1 Cor. 4:4; Ign. *Rom.* 9.2//1 Cor. 15:8–9). The frequency and familiarity Ignatius shows with 1 Corinthians suggests that he knew the letter.

It also seems highly likely that Ignatius was familiar with Ephesians:

Ign. *Eph.* Inscript.

Eph. 1:3–5

τῇ εὐλογημένῃ ἐν μεγέθει θεοῦ πατρός
πληρώματι, τῇ προωρισμένῃ πρὸ αἰώνων
εἶναι διὰ παντός εἰς δόξαν παράμονον
ἄτρεπτον, ἡνωμένην καὶ ἐκλελεγμένην
ἐν πάθει ἀληθινῷ ἐν θελήματι τοῦ πατρὸς
καὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, τῇ
ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ ἀξιωμακαρίστῃ τῇ οὕσῃ
ἐν Ἐφέσῳ τῆς Ἀσίας, πλείστα ἐν Ἰησοῦ
Χριστῷ καὶ ἐν ἀμώμῳ χαρὰ χαίρειν.

Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου
ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ εὐλογήσας
ἡμᾶς ἐν πάσῃ εὐλογίᾳ πνευματικῇ ἐν
τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ, ⁴καθὼς
ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς
κόσμου εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους
κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ, ⁵προορίσας
ἡμᾶς εἰς υἰοθεσίαν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
εἰς αὐτόν, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ
θελήματος αὐτοῦ

Ign. *Eph.* 10.3

Eph. 5:1

μιμηταὶ δὲ τοῦ κυρίου σπουδάζωμεν εἶναι *Γίνεσθε οὖν μιμηταὶ τοῦ θεοῦ*

Inge notes that it is the cumulative effect of references similar to Paul's letter to the Ephesians in Ignatius' own letter to the Ephesians that demonstrates Ignatius' knowledge of Paul's letter.¹¹⁹ This is most clearly seen in Ignatius' reworking of Paul's introduction to the Ephesians (Eph. 1:3–5). Ignatius certainly changes aspects of Paul's text and makes it his own, but it nevertheless remains recognizably Pauline. The note to imitate God in the second parallel is not unique to Paul or early Christianity (e.g. Philo, *Spec. Laws* 4.73; *Virt.* 168; Let. Aris. 188). However, Inge suggests the parallel on the basis that the contexts of the passages are similar.¹²⁰ But this is not the only letter in which Ignatius

to show the parallel ideas that Ignatius alters for his own purposes. For other, less clear references to 1 Corinthians in *Ephesians* see, Inge, "Ignatius," 65–7.

119 Inge, "Ignatius," 67. For a list of Paul's Ephesian references in the letters of Ignatius see Inge, Ignatius, 67–8. See Paul Foster, "The Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch and the Writings that later formed the New Testament," in *RNTAF*, 168–9, for a discussion on Ignatius' knowledge and use of Ephesians.

120 Inge, "Ignatius," 68.

refers to Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Ignatius also seems to refer to it in his letter to Polycarp:

Ign. *Pol.* 5.1

Eph. 5:25

παράγγελλε ἐν ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
ἀγαπᾶν τὰς συμβίους, ὡς ὁ κύριος τὴν
ἐκκλησίαν

ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας, καθὼς καὶ
ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν

The encouragement to love spouses like Christ loved the church is distinctly Pauline, as far as can be discerned from the earliest Christian writings. The changes made by Ignatius to Paul's text "are not of great significance in counting against dependence."¹²¹ It appears, then, that at least 1 Corinthians and Ephesians were known by Ignatius.¹²² Further it might indicate that 1 Corinthians had circulated beyond its original locale. Similarly, Ephesians either shows that the letter circulated beyond its original locale or that the author's expected circulation actually took place.

5.3 *Polycarp*

Polycarp, the earliest so-called Apostolic Father from Asia for whom we have evidence,¹²³ potentially references eleven letters in his letter to the *Philippians*. Many of those letters, as we will see, have much to commend our belief that Polycarp knew them.

The first letter to be discussed is 1 Peter, since it is the most referenced letter in *Philippians*.

¹²¹ Foster, "Ignatius and Writings," 169.

¹²² Similarly, Foster, "Ignatius and Writings," 169: "There can be little doubt that both were well known to Ignatius." For a discussion of the other letters possibly known to Ignatius see, Inge, "Ignatius," 64–76; Foster, "Ignatius and Writings," 164–72.

¹²³ So-called by those modern scholars who include Polycarp in their collection of writings of the Apostolic Fathers. E.g. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1–3 (London: Macmillan, 1889–90); Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2 vols. LCL (London: Heinemann, 1912); Bart D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2 vols. LCL (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 2003); Holmes ed., *The Apostolic Fathers*.

Pol. *Phil.* 1.3

1 Pet. 1:8

εἰς ὃν οὐκ ἰδόντες πιστεύετε χαρὰ
ἀνεκκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῳ

ὃν οὐκ ἰδόντες ἀγαπάτε, εἰς ὃν ἄρτι μὴ
ὁρῶντες, πιστεύοντες δὲ ἀγαλλιάσθε
χαρὰ ἀνεκκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῳ

Pol. *Phil.* 2.1

1 Pet. 1:13

Διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας

Διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας

Pol. *Phil.* 2.1

1 Pet. 1:21

τὸν ἐγείραντα τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν
Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ δόντα αὐτῷ δόξαν

τὸν ἐγείραντα αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ
δόξαν αὐτῷ δόντα

Pol. *Phil.* 2.2

1 Pet. 3:9

μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ
λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας

μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ
λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας

Pol. *Phil.* 8.1

1 Pet. 2:24

ὃς ἀνήνεγκεν ἡμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας τῷ
ιδίῳ σώματι ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον

ὃς τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν
ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον

Pol. *Phil.* 8.1

1 Pet. 2:22

ὃς ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν, οὐδὲ εὗρέθη
δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ

ὃς ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν, οὐδὲ εὗρέθη
δόλος ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ

In addition to these references there are five other, shorter references (Pol. *Phil.* 5.3//1 Pet. 2:11; Pol. *Phil.* 6.3//1 Pet. 3:13; Pol. *Phil.* 7.2//1 Pet. 4:7; Pol. *Phil.* 10.1//1 Pet. 2:17; Pol. *Phil.* 10.2//1 Pet. 2:12). The overwhelming verbal agreement between the two texts suggests dependence and the numerous references suggest the same.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Similarly, P. V. M. Bénécke, "Polycarp," in *NTAF*, 87; Michael W. Holmes, "Polycarp's *Letter to the Philippians* and the Writings that later formed the New Testament," in *RNTAF*, 223.

There are several potential references to Ephesians. However, only one of these references is in the Greek tradition; the other three are in the Latin and so are dependent on the quality of the translation.¹²⁵

Pol. <i>Phil.</i> 1.3	Eph. 2:5, 9
χάριτι ἐστε σεσωσμένοι, οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων,	χάριτι ἐστε σεσωσμένοι ... ⁹ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων
Pol. <i>Phil.</i> 10.2	Eph. 5:21
Omnes vobis invicem <i>subiecti estote</i>	Ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ
Pol. <i>Phil.</i> 12.1	Eph. 4:26
et sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram	ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω ἐπὶ τῷ παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν
Pol. <i>Phil.</i> 12.3	Eph. 6:18
<i>Pro omnibus sanctis orate</i>	προσευχόμενοι ... περὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων

The first reference has the most to commend it, though if we could be assured of the quality of the Latin translation this would indicate near certain knowledge of the letter.¹²⁶

Another Pauline text that we can be certain that Polycarp knew was Paul's letter to the Philippians. In Pol. *Phil.* 3.2 and 11.3, Polycarp refers to Paul's letter(s)¹²⁷ to the Philippians. It is clear enough that he knows the let-

¹²⁵ Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 122, says that the Latin is reliable. However, in his, "Polycarp and Writings," 204, 214, 222, he is much more cautious with his claims.

¹²⁶ Benecke, "Polycarp," 89, rates Polycarp's knowledge of Ephesians as a B. Holmes, "Polycarp and Writings," rates it higher, giving it an A.

¹²⁷ Polycarp clearly refers to knowing more than one Philippian letter. However, the textual history of the letter is that of a unified letter. These two points have led to a number of scholarly positions. On the basis of Polycarp's statement and perceived disjunctions in Paul's letter to the Philippians, such as the "abrupt shift in mood content" in Phil. 3:1–2, some have claimed that Paul's letter is a composite document (e.g. John Reumann, *Philippians*, AB 33B [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008], 8–9, quotation from p. 9). J. B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Macmillan, 1885), 138–42,

ter. There are three potential references in *Philippians* to Paul's letter as well (Pol. *Phil.* 5.2//Phil. 1:27; Pol. *Phil.* 9.2//Phil. 2:16; Pol. *Phil.* 12.3//Phil. 3:18), but even if Polycarp did not reference the letter in quotation or allusion, his mentioning of the letter (or letters) shows that he did in fact know it (them). For, much like Clement's statement about 1 Corinthians above, it seems that Polycarp was able to "study [the letters] carefully" (Pol. *Phil.* 3.2) like the Philippians.

There is some evidence that Polycarp knew 1 Corinthians. *Philippians* has a Greek reference that follows 1 Corinthians closely which suggests dependence and one weaker reference.¹²⁸ There is also a second potentially strong reference, but it is based on the Latin version that has come down to us, and so again we are dependent on the trustworthiness of that reception. If the Latin version could be confidently judged to be faithful to the Greek, it would remove any doubt, since the reference is introduced.

Pol. *Phil.* 5.3

1 Cor. 6:9–10

καὶ οὐτε πόρνοι οὐτε μαλακοὶ
οὐτε ἀρσενικοῖται βασιλείαν θεοῦ
κληρονομήσουσιν

οὐτε πόρνοι οὐτε εἰδολολάτριά
οὐτε μοιχοὶ οὐτε μαλακοὶ οὐτε
ἀρσενικοῖται ... βασιλείαν θεοῦ
κληρονομήσουσιν.

Pol. *Phil.* 11.2

1 Cor. 6:2

aut nescimus quia sancti mundum
iudicabunt sicut Paulus docet

ἢ οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι οἱ ἅγιοι τὸν κόσμον
κρινούσιν

suggested that the plural referred to a letter of importance, and was referring to a single letter. Zahn, *Geschichte*, 814–16, suggested that Polycarp was referring to both Philippians and the Thessalonian letters and grouping them all under the common province to which they were written, and Polycarp simply referred to them all as the Philippians. However, many commentators view the letter as a unity (e.g. Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians*, NCB [London: Oliphants, 1976], 22–34, esp. 34; Gordon D. Fee, *Philippians*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 22–3), though this position makes it difficult to account for Polycarp's knowledge of letters—Fee does not even discuss Pol. *Phil.* 3.2. For a full discussion on these views, see Martin, *Philippians*, 10–21.

128 See Benecke, "Polycarp," 85; Holmes, "Polycarp and Writings," 207.

Pol. *Phil.* 3.2–3

1 Cor. 13:13

τὴν δοθεῖσαν ὑμῖν πίστιν, ...
ἐπακολουθοῦσης τῆς ἐλπίδος,
προαγούσης τῆς ἀγάπης

Νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ
τρία ταῦτα

Polycarp also appears to have known 1 John:

Pol. *Phil.* 7.1

1 John 4:2–3

Πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν μὴ ὁμολογῇ Ἰησοῦν
Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθέναι
ἀντίχριστός ἐστιν

καὶ πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ τὸν
Ἰησοῦν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν· καὶ τοῦτό
ἐστιν τὸ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου

Pol. *Phil.* 7.1

1 John 3:8

ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν

ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν

The context of *Philippians* is clearly dealing with false teachers (Pol. *Phil.* 7.2), which seems to be a similar context to that of 1 John.¹²⁹ Further, the two references to 1 John suggest that Polycarp knew the letter. If these conclusions are correct, Polycarp knew a number of early Christian epistles, including, 1 Corinthians, Philippians, Ephesians, 1 Peter, and 1 John. There are six other potential references to New Testament letters in Polycarp. These others, however, are not as clear as the references discussed above because they combine elements of common early Christian tradition, and thus make identifying an exact parallel difficult.¹³⁰

From this quick survey of three authors from the late first and early second centuries CE, we have seen evidence that might suggest the circulation of epistles beyond the initial audience from an early period. Greater discussion concerning these texts and others can be found in the two Oxford volumes, but the theme is generally consistent: Early Christian authors appear to know and reference early Christian literature.¹³¹ These references may indicate, though

129 On 1 John dealing with teachers, see Marshall, *Epistles*, 14–16; Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John*, AB 30 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982), 32. That is not to say that both texts were necessarily dealing with the same false teachers, but only that the authors were both dealing with teachers they considered false.

130 Benecke, “Polycarp,” 85–101; Holmes, “Polycarp and Writings,” 201–225.

131 See Society, *NTAF*; Gregory, *RNTAF*. The epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas appear to break this trend, but even these do betray slight evidence of knowing other

do not demonstrably prove, circulation of the text to communities beyond their initial audiences. However, as we saw above, there is enough evidence to show that circulating letters to communities to which they were not written was a part of the early Christian practice. As such, these allusions seem to be highly indicative of that practice.

6 Circulation of Books and the Gospels

Circulation beyond an initial audience was done with books as well in the ancient world. Books were often shared between authors to elicit feedback for revision before a final draft was sent for circulation.¹³² However, as soon as a copy left an author's hands, it was liable to circulate beyond the initial audience. In the clearest example, Cicero castigates Atticus for circulating the fifth book of *De Finibus* to Balbus before it was finished, and before sending it to the dedicatee (*Att.* 13.21a). He had also learned that Atticus's copyist had let Caerellia make copies of *De Finibus* (*Att.* 13.21a).¹³³ Cicero knew they were Atticus's copies because Cicero had not let his draft out to be copied (*Att.* 13.21a). Unfinished drafts could also be circulated privately to small groups with the author's consent.¹³⁴ Even these private readings might have led to wider circulation than the author wanted, since guests could ask the host for copies of the books.¹³⁵

Having discussed the wider practice of authors and recipients in this chapter and the previous one, it may be legitimately questioned how these two members of the elite represent the literary practice of the early Christians, as

early Christian texts. See J. V. Bartlet, "Barnabas," in *NTAF*, 1–23; James Carleton-Paget, "The Epistle of Barnabas and the Writings that later formed the New Testament," in *RNTAF*, 229–50; J. Drummond, "Hermas," in *NTAF*, 105–23; Joseph Verheyden, "The Shepherd of Hermas and the Writings that later formed the New Testament," in *RNTAF*, 293–329.

¹³² The exchange between authors can be seen, for example, in Pliny, *Ep.* 1.8; 2.5, 10; 4.20; 7.20; 8.3, 4, 7, 15; 9.18, 28, 29, 35; Cicero, *Att.* 1.13, 19; 4.5, 11; 13.5, 14, 21a, 25, 32; 15.13, 27; 16.3, 5, 6; *Fam.* 6.7.1; 9.8.1; 12.17.2; 15.20.12; 15.21.1, 2. On the proofreading of exchanged texts see, for example, Cicero, *Att.* 1.19; 4.5; 13.14, 15, 21; *Fam.* 6.7.1. Even letters could be sent to associates to be proofread before being sent on to their addressee (e.g. *Att.* 13.27).

¹³³ See also Larry W. Hurtado and Chris Keith, "Writing and Book Production in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods," in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 73–5.

¹³⁴ Cicero, *Att.* 16.2, 3, 11.

¹³⁵ Alexander, "Ancient Book Production," 98.

both Esler and Sim do.¹³⁶ It can be safely answered: “Things literary can’t literally be reserved for the few in society in which a good many people had instrumental literacy to a fair level of attainment.”¹³⁷ A number of texts have come down which illustrate the exchange of texts through letters: *PMilVogl* 11; *SB* 11 996; *PPetaus* 30.¹³⁸ One of the most significant, though, is P. Oxy. 2192:

Postscript 1: Have a copy made of books six and seven of Hypsicrates’ *Men Who Appear in Comedies* and send it to me. Harpocraton says that Polio has them among his books, and probably others have them too. And he also has prose epitomes of Thersagorus’s *Myths of Tragedy*.

Postscript 2: Demetrius the bookseller has them [that is, the two books of the *Men Who Appear in Comedies*], according to Harpocraton. I have ordered Apollonides to send me some of my own books—which you’ll find out from him. And if you find any volumes of Seleucus’s work on *Tenses/Metrics/Rhythms* that I don’t own, have copies made and send them to me. Diodorus’s circle also has some that I don’t own.¹³⁹

In this letter there are two distinct “circles,” namely Diodorus’s and the author’s. The fact that a letter is sent suggests that the author’s circle is not constricted to a single geographical locale.¹⁴⁰ The letter’s recipient and at least two others in the group (Pollio and Apollonides) lived in Oxyrhynchus. Further, the author and his circle knew of another circle; the author knew that the other circle had texts that the author was missing; and he expected the texts to be shared between the groups! The parallels with early Christianity are indeed

136 Esler, “Community and Gospel,” 224; Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians,” 18.

137 William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 204.

138 For a discussion of these texts see Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 183–5.

139 Translation Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 182.

140 It could be that the author and the recipient both lived in Oxyrhynchus and were both busy so that a letter had to suffice, but many scholars assume that the two groups were in different locales. For example, see Alan K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs 332 B.C.–A.D. 642: From Alexander to the Arab Conquest* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 161; George E. Pesely, “How many Copies of the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* have been Found?” *AHB* 8/2 (1994): 41 n.22; Rosalia Hatzilambrou, “P. Oxy. XVIII 2192 Revisited,” in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and Its Texts*, ed. Alan K. Bowman, *Graeco-Roman Memoirs* 93 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2007), 283; Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 182. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs*, 161; Pesely, “How many Copies?” 41 n.22; and Hatzilambrou, “P.Oxy. XVIII 2192 Revisited,” 283, believe that other locale to be Alexandria. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture*, 182 n.7, however, does not think that Alexandria is necessarily the other locale.

striking: there were multiple “circles” which had some interest in particular writings; they were spread over multiple locales; and they expected the texts to circulate.

In light of the circulation of the texts in *P.Oxy* 2192, we might include a discussion on the circulation of the Gospels beyond their initial local communities, wherever those might have been. Assuming Markan priority for the sake of argument, the Gospel of Mark circulated from its place of origin to the locales in which Matthew and Luke lived, as Bauckham pointed out in *GAC*.¹⁴¹ Assuming the Farrer theory for the sake of argument, not only did Mark circulate beyond its initial locale to the locales of Matthew and Luke, but Matthew also circulated from its initial locale to the locale where Luke lived.¹⁴² Regardless of how one construes the relationship between the Synoptic Gospels, one cannot escape the necessary observation that a Synoptic or several Synoptic Gospels circulated beyond their initial locales and were used by the other evangelists in their respective locales.

The statements of Papias at least reveal his knowledge of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Eusebius records the comments of Papias, who is himself relating the tradition of “the presbyter” (presumably of Ephesian fame; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.6), on the Gospel of Mark:

Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely

EUSEBIUS, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15

And about the Gospel of Matthew he says, “So then Matthew wrote the oracles in the Hebrew language, and everyone interpreted them as he was able” (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15). Gamble takes this as evidence that Papias knew

¹⁴¹ Bauckham, “For Whom?” 12.

¹⁴² On the Farrer theory, see Mark Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity International, 2002).

(i.e. had possession of) these two Gospels.¹⁴³ If he did have possession of them, we would see the circulation of these two Gospels from their original locales to Asia Minor.¹⁴⁴ At the very least, we see the knowledge of the existence of these two texts in Asia Minor.

In many of the examples discussed in the various sections above, there is also evidence of the circulation of the Gospels. There are allusions to the Gospels in 1 Clement, the letters of Ignatius, and Polycarp's letter alongside allusions to the letters.¹⁴⁵ There is evidence of the circulation of the Gospels in collections. There is, of course, Irenaeus' classical defense of the four canonical Gospels, which viewed them as a collection of four and only four (*Haer.* 3.11.8). Of the examples listed above, the Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs almost certainly shows that Gospels had circulated to Scillium in addition to Paul's letters, since they had books and letters (Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs §20). The books in their chest probably refer to the Gospels.¹⁴⁶ There is no reason to limit the "books" to only the Gospels, but there is also no reason to exclude them. If this is the case, then we see that at least some of the Gospels had circulated to Scillium and were probably also translated into Latin. At least the Gospel of Luke was known to Marcion and edited by him alongside Paul's letters (Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.1). Further, Dionysius knew of those who were probably editing Gospels.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, Tatian's Diatessaron takes the four independent accounts and unifies them.¹⁴⁸ Lastly, one of the other major ways we see evidence of circulation of the Gospels is through manuscript evidence. From Egypt, we have twelve MSS of Matthew, one MS of Mark, seven MSS of Luke, and sixteen MSS of John from the second and third centuries CE.¹⁴⁹ Significantly, P⁵² can be dated to the second century.¹⁵⁰ A second century date for P⁵² means

143 Cf. Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 102.

144 Neither Gospel is linked to Asia Minor as its place of origin.

145 See discussions of the allusions to the Gospels in Carlyle, "1 Clement," 58–62; Inge, "Ignatius," 76–83; Benecke, "Polycarp," 101–4. Gregory, "1 Clement and Writings," 131–40; Paul Foster, "Ignatius and Writings," 173–86; Holmes, "Polycarp and Writings," 188–98.

146 Gerald Bonner, "The Scillitan Saints and the Pauline Epistles," *JEH* 7/2 (1956): 144.

147 Caspar René Gregory, *Canon and Text of the New Testament*, 1TL (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1907), 137, suggests that the writings of the Lord were both Gospels and letters: "Probably Dionysius has at first in view the Gospels as especially pertaining to the Lord."

148 Tjitze Baarda, "Tatian's Diatessaron and the Greek Text of the Gospels," in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Kruger, Michael J. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 337.

149 Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 20.

150 C. H. Roberts, *An Unpublished Fragment of the Fourth Gospel in the John Rylands Library* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1935), 25, originally dated the MS to the middle

that within a few decades of its composition the Gospel of John had circulated to Egypt. The above evidence of the circulation of the Gospels beyond their initial locales shows that early Christians did not view the generic distinction as making a difference concerning circulation. This suggests that the Gospel communities also had a “translocal outlook.”

7 Conclusions and Summary

It is incontrovertible that it was the practice of the early Christians to circulate their texts beyond their initial audiences. We have seen this illustrated in a number of different ways. In the case of the catholicizing of Romans and in the letter collections, we have seen that texts written by Paul were circulated beyond their initial audiences. Additionally, the evidence of *Pol. Phil.* 13.2, the manuscript copies of the Shepherd, *Against Heresies*, and the collection of letters at Scillium suggests that Christians continued the practice of circulating their texts beyond their initial locales through the second century. I also showed that the Gospels were circulated beyond their initial locales. In some instances, the Gospels and letters circulated beyond their initial locales to the same locales. References to both Gospels and letters in 1 Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp suggest that these various texts circulated to the same places.¹⁵¹ This can be seen most clearly in the example of allusions, mentioned in passing in the section on the Gospels. Further, the formation of a Pauline letter collection

of the second century. Many scholars were content to follow him on this date. For a list see, Brent Nongbri, “The Use and Abuse of P52: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel,” *HTR* 98/1 (2005): 24 n.3. Aland and Aland, *Text*, 84, have suggested a date as early as 125 CE for the MS. Tuckett, “P52 and Nomina Sacra,” 544, and Hill, “Did the Scribe?” 592, have attempted to get around this problem of the early or late dating by leaving open the possibility of either period. And Still others, Don Barker, “The Dating of New Testament Papyri,” *NTS* 57/4 (2011): 575, and Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse, “Early New Testament Manuscripts and Their Dates: A Critique of Theological Paleography,” *ETL* 88/4 (2012): 466, have widened the dates further by proposing a date from the late second to early third centuries CE. Orsini and Clarysse, “Early New Testament Manuscripts,” 458, suggests similarities between P⁵² and two texts dated from the early and mid-second century (P^{SI} v 446; P. Oxy. LVIII 2917, respectively). As a result, I date the text in the second century CE, though leave open the possibility, in light of recent discussions, that the text dates from the late second century CE.

- ¹⁵¹ Carlyle, “1 Clement,” 58–62; Gregory, “1 Clement and Writings,” 131–40; Inge, “Ignatius,” 76–83; Foster, “Ignatius and Writings,” 173–86; Benecke, “Polycarp,” 101–4; Holmes, “Polycarp and Writings,” 188–99.

as well as the formation of the (eventual) canonical Gospels into a collection, suggests that early Christian texts were treated similarly. The similarities in the circulation of both Gospels and letters beyond their initial locales suggest the contributors to *GAC* were wrong to marginalize the role of epistolary literature in their discussion.

In the previous chapter, we saw that the process of circulation to multiple locales was expected by several of the earliest Christian authors. They expected some of their texts to circulate to multiple locales. This initial circulation was then carried on or furthered in the practices, as we have seen in this chapter.

It is worth pausing now to consider the main points of the argument thus far. Contributors to *GAC* marginalized the importance of letters, suggesting that the generic difference made them unfit for comparison. Although this is true as far as it relates to interpretation, it is manifestly not the case in terms for discussing circulation. By including letters in the discussion, we place the Gospels alongside other early Christian literature. It allows us to take a step back from the idiosyncratic nature of the discipline and see the forest.

The argument of *GAC* was that the evangelists expected their Gospels to circulate. In that regard, we examined what early Christian letters tell us about authors' expected audiences. From this we saw that some authors, including Paul, the earliest Christian author about whom we know, expected some of their texts to circulate to multiple locales. This was seen especially in 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians, as well as 1 Peter, the seven letters of Revelation 2–3, Hermas, and possibly Ephesians, the Apostolic Decree (if either authentic or reflective of an actual practice), and James. These examples span from the fifties CE through the middle of the second century CE. This shows that in the periods before, during, and after the writing of the Gospels, Christian authors expected some of their texts to circulate to multiple locales. The insights afforded by *Nebenadressaten* also suggest that texts were composed from the perspective of multiple locales, even if they were addressed to a single locale. This should not be surprising. We have seen several times that a text with a particular situation in view was expected by its author to be read in other communities.

Following on the heels of the discussion of authors' expectation of audience, this chapter has examined the early Christian *practice* of circulation. It has shown that early Christians actually did circulate their texts beyond their initial audiences. The fact that authors expected some of their texts to circulate, combined with the reality of early Christian practice, raises the question, with regard to the *GAC* debate, of whether scholars should assume that the evangelists' expectations (stated or unstated) would have differed. There is no reason to suppose that a given Gospel would not have been treated differently.

On the isolated community model, Christian communities had little contact with one another. This lack of contact would have been a serious impediment to the circulation expected by the authors and the later circulation. Given all of the evidence for circulation we have seen, however, it is reasonable to rethink this model.¹⁵² I will show this in the following chapter.

¹⁵² As some scholars are already doing as noted at the beginning of the chapter, p. 65 n. 1–2.

Circulation and Social Networks

In the previous two chapters, I have shown that some early Christian authors expected that some of their letters would circulate to multiple locales and that early Christians did, in fact, circulate letters and texts beyond their initial audiences. In that sense, the previous two chapters have focused on positions and roles within the social network. The wide circulation of texts, books and letters, was common in the ancient world by both the author and the recipients. If early Christian authors and those who read their texts did not have this circulation in mind or carry it out, they would be atypical. This chapter focuses on flows. Flows are the channels necessary to facilitate that circulation. This chapter shifts, then, the focus to the possible channels that existed to facilitate circulation in the early church.

1 Social Networks and Early Christianity

In the previous chapter, I said that the circulation of texts to multiple locales reveals connected communities. Several scholars in the course of the *GAC* debate have also discussed the social circulation of the Gospels. Thompson introduces network theory into the discussion in his chapter in *GAC*.¹ Alexander gives it additional attention. She says, “The simplest way to obtain a copy of a book was to find a friend (or a library) who had an exemplar and would let you make your own copy from it ... There is ample evidence to show that making one’s own copy was normal practice in scholarly and intellectual circles in Rome and across the empire.”² This observation by Alexander, especially the reference to friends, moves us to the world of social networks. She goes on to note: “This factor in its turn underlines the extent to which the circulation of literature (any kind of literature) in the ancient world depended on the prior existence of social networks.”³ Here, she draws on the work of Gamble:

Traditionally, then, publication took place in the context of social relations between persons interested in literature, and subsequent copies of

1 Michael B. Thompson, “Holy Internet, in Bauckham, *Gospels*,” 49.

2 Alexander, “Ancient Book Production,” 90.

3 Alexander, “Ancient Book Production,” 99.

the work circulated along paths of friendship or personal acquaintance. For the most part, these *networks* existed before and apart from literary interests, arising partly on the basis of those factors that defined the upper class, providing it the leisure to read, partly through the complex relations of patrons and clients, and partly through the natural affinity of persons of talent and cultivated interests.⁴

On the role of circulation through social networks, Alexander concludes, as noted above,

This plurality of interweaving networks should further warn us against an oversimple dichotomy between “local” and “general” circulation of texts within the churches. The network model itself implies not a monolithic structure but a multiplicity of intersecting lines of communication. These will naturally generate sub-networks and individual patterns of attachment within the larger whole.⁵

In what follows, I will suggest that there were sub-networks within the early church that help explain the expectation of circulation found in early Christian letters and in the actual practice of circulation.

Kim Haines-Eitzen also sees the social nature of circulation in the early church: “Social networks among early Christians provided the framework by which Christian literature was transcribed, transmitted, and disseminated.”⁶ She argues that Christian scribes who copied and circulated literature “did so from within private scribal networks.”⁷ The networks she describes reveal an interconnectedness on the part of the early Christians. The networks for which she argues are those made up of literate individuals circulating literature, which are the uniform picture presented to us as the primary form of circulation in both classical and Christian literature.⁸ She concludes, “Scribes and readers, interested members of Christian communities, formed networks that enabled the transmission of early Christian literature,” and says that the networks were “theologically (ascetically, socially, etc.) driven.”⁹ These variously interested networks resemble the sub-networks suggested above by Thompson. The texts of Haines-Eitzen’s study, namely the *Martyrdom of*

4 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 85, italics added.

5 Alexander, “Ancient Book Production,” 104.

6 Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 79.

7 Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 78.

8 Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 82. See above, pp. 62–5.

9 Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters*, 104.

Polycarp and those contained in the Bodmer Codex, are from the middle of the second and late third or early fourth centuries, respectively. I will argue that there were networks in place in the first and early second centuries that allowed for the kind of circulation Haines-Eitzen describes.

Additionally, Lincoln Blumell examined the travel habits and epistolary networks of Christians in Egypt from the second to seventh centuries CE.¹⁰ He argued that letters “afford insights into a number of important issues concerning ancient Christian travel (who, how, where and why) and may also disclose something about patterns of travel and communication from which some impressionistic conclusions may be drawn.”¹¹ Several of Blumell’s conclusions are relevant for observations below: 1) the most common reason for travel was for one’s vocation;¹² 2) “Christian patterns of travel (and potentially epistolary networking) ... closely mirrored pre-existing patterns”;¹³ and 3) wherever a traveler stopped, he or she created connections between his or her home community and the community in which he or she stopped.¹⁴ There are other patterns noted by Blumell, but these three represent those most recurring similarities between the epistles Blumell examines and the earlier epistles discussed here. These conclusions are important because, as I will argue below, early Christian networks developed along similar lines. I will argue that early Christian networks were developed by those who traveled for their vocation, for example as a missionary. However, other travelers certainly carried the Christian gospel and news of their community to other destinations. One might think, for example, of Chloe’s people (1 Cor. 1:11), who were most probably traveling on business, and revealed the news of the parties in Corinth to Paul¹⁵ or those Jews gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost in Acts 2, who returned home with the gospel after the celebration of Pentecost. It was the pre-existing networks that took them between the cities. Such networks

10 Blumell, “Mapping Christians,” 89–161.

11 Blumell, “Mapping Christians,” 90.

12 Blumell, “Mapping Christians,” 104.

13 Blumell, “Mapping Christians,” 123. Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 62–7, has argued compellingly for the use of these pre-existing networks for the growth of Christianity. Jeffrey A. D. Weima, *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings*, LNTS 101 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 39, 115; and Peter M. Head, “Claudius Terentianus and the New Testament: Insights and Observations on Epistolary Themes,” *TynBul* 65/2 (2014), 244, suggests that certain aspects of letters, especially the greetings, “connect communities in different places.”

14 Blumell, “Mapping Christians,” 145.

15 See Fee, *First Corinthians*, 54 n.32, for the likelihood that Chloe’s people were slaves or freedmen acting on her business interests.

could have facilitated the spread of Christianity and, more importantly for my purposes, the circulation of texts.

The above understanding of social networks stands in direct contrast to the understanding of community as discussed in chapter one, that is communities as isolated from one another on the basis of theological interests or praxis. This can be seen explicitly in the work of Sim in particular. Bauckham had pointed to the travel habits of early Christians in his opening chapter in *GAC* to argue that the evangelists had similar travel habits.¹⁶ Sim, as noted in chapter one, argued that the travel of Paul and his companions should not be transferred to the rest of the early church due to “the division within the ranks of the early Christians.”¹⁷ He also said, “Our sources strongly suggest that the rival Christian factions had little contact with one another. More importantly, on the occasions when there was communication between these groups, it was often conducted in a spirit of hostility.”¹⁸ As I said in chapter two, it is important to note that the instances of hostile communication show that the networks were, in fact, linked and that the conflicts appear in several locales. The conflict in Christian communities in various locales can be seen in Paul’s letters especially, though certainly the appearance of “rival factions” is not limited to the Pauline communities. It appears that various early Christian networks stretched to many of the same cities, which suggests a high degree of contact.

Sim’s disagreement with Burridge about the concept of market niche offers us an opportunity to bring together a number of the observations above about the nature of circulation in the ancient world generally, and Christians in particular, made by Alexander and Haines-Eitzen. Sim argued that Burridge “draws the correct conclusion” that “they [the Gospels] were designed to be read by like-minded Christians.”¹⁹ What Sim fails to see in Burridge’s discussion, however, is that the concept of market niche is not a geographically limited concept. Burridge says, “Instead of looking at the archeological and literary evidence about Antioch (as a possible site for the Matthean community) or Ephesus (for the Johannine) and then interpreting the Gospels in that light, *we would do better to imagine people all over the Mediterranean world who might fit each evangelist’s projected readership*, rather than just a small group of people in one specific community.”²⁰ Burridge’s claim fits well with Alexander’s concept of subnetworks. For example, Burridge’s belief that Matthew’s Gospel

16 Bauckham, “For Whom?” 33–6.

17 Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians?” 11.

18 Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians?” 11.

19 Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians?” 11.

20 Burridge, “About People, by People,” 143–4, italics added.

was for “Christians from a Jewish background who have a high regard for the Mosaic Law” or that Luke’s Gospel was for a “Gentile market niche” divides the Christian network into two well established subnetworks.²¹ These social categories, Jew and Gentile, further corroborate Haines-Eitzen’s suggestion that texts circulated among socially driven networks.²²

The social positions of Christian and non-Christian authors allow for helpful comparisons about what we should expect of authors in the ancient world. Richard Last’s initial objection to *GAC* was because “everything regardless of genre was written for the community.”²³ However, he has since been examining the social networks of ancient historians and biographers, and his statements about social networks are relevant to my discussion. The common view that Gospel writers were embedded in “restricted social networks consisting nearly exclusively of people who shared ‘Christian’ cultic beliefs and practices,” means that though the evangelists, and Matthew in particular “was a relatively highly skilled writer with opportunities to immerse himself in the cultural life of Antioch to the degree that other comparably trained authors were able to do so, he lived ‘on the margins’ of Antiochian society.”²⁴ Countering the view that the evangelists had “restricted social networks,” Last says, “In response to the academic guild’s more recent identification of NT gospels as historiographies, or divisions of this genre ... the challenge now is to reconstruct the social relationships of gospel authors in ways that fall within the spectrum of known practices attested by writers of analogous literature.”²⁵ When the evangelists are

understood within the context of the range of activities practiced by other people who wrote similar literature, new questions are raised about the social relationships of gospel authors with ... other contributors to the cultural life of their *poleis*. It is within these networks—formed on the basis of common occupational affiliation and/or cultural

21 Burridge, “About People, by People,” 143. On the well-established nature of Jewish and Gentile Christianity, see the initial division of labor in Gal. 2:7–8, and subsequent, secondary discussion: D. R. de Lacey, “Gentiles,” *DPL* 335–39; S. McKnight, “Gentile Mission,” *DLNT* 388–94; D. A. Hagner, “Jewish Christianity,” *DLNT* 579–87.

22 That the ethnic categories “Jew” and “Gentile” are social categories, see Peter Ratcliffe, *Race, Ethnicity and Difference: Imagining the Inclusive Society* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2004), 28–34. See also the discussion in John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (T&T Clark, Edinburgh), 408–10.

23 Last, “Communities that Write,” 180.

24 Last, “Social Relationships,” 224.

25 Last, “Social Relationships,” 225.

aspiration—rather than within ancient Christianity exclusively, that gospel literature likely emerged.²⁶

Last uses honorary inscriptions to investigate the social networks of Greco-Roman authors.²⁷ Following Blumell above, I suggest early Christian letters provide evidence for the social networks in place for the possible circulation of Gospels and letters.

In what follows, an examination of early Christian social networks, it is important to hold together several ideas from above: 1) early Christian communities were not homogenous; 2) ancient circulation typically occurred through social networks; 3) letters may provide patterns of networking; 4) social networks are driven by a number of different means, including theological, social, and geographical interests. In addition, then, to Last's examination of historiographers and biographers and their social networks, a study of letters and the networks revealed in them might suggest early Christian networks available for the circulation of both Gospels and letters.

2 Social Network Analysis of Early Christian Letters

The goal of this section is to illustrate the possible channels for flows.²⁸ The bulk of the evidence for these social networks will come from letters, although it will not be strictly limited to them. I focus on letters because letters "[replicate] existing networks of relationships between people."²⁹ Letters show "how a variety of relationships within society are structured and managed,"³⁰ and "they reinforce those relationships."³¹ Thus, letters serve as key resource in examining ancient social networks. This chapter will examine several anchors (Paul, the Elder, Ignatius, and Polycarp) and a possible Jewish Christian network, looking at their respective sets of the early Christian network primarily through their letters.

Having used the words "anchor" and "set," it will be important to define a few terms that will be used frequently below. An "anchor" is an individual around whom the network is positioned. The anchor and his network constitute a

²⁶ Last, "Social Relationships," 226.

²⁷ Last, "Social Relationships," 226.

²⁸ See p. 19 above; for my purposes, "flow" is synonymous with "circulation" since both deal with "transmission." Marin and Wellman, "Social Networks," 18.

²⁹ Judith M. Lieu, "Letters and the Topography of Early Christianity," *NTS* 62/2 (2016): 171.

³⁰ Lieu, "Letters and Topography," 168.

³¹ Lieu, "Letters and Topography," 168.

“set” or “cluster” if it is a part of a larger network. There are two ways, then, to discuss networks. There are individual networks (e.g. Paul’s network), and the Christian network. Individual networks are sets or clusters within the Christian network. In what follows, an individual network may at times be used synonymously with set (e.g. Paul’s network/set), while the Christian network could only be called a network, because it encapsulates all of the sets and is not a division of anything else.³²

One final note must be mentioned before proceeding to the analysis, which regards its limits. This chapter will focus on various sets of the wider early Christian network in as much as they can be discerned from the letters. It goes without saying that early *Christian* social networks were far more extensive than the few names we read in the letters that have come down to us. That is, the individuals and churches that serve as our focal points were connected to more Christians than those named in the letters. The names that do come down to us are accidents of history. We can examine these names and the connections that they represent, but it would be foolish to think that what is to be discussed below represents all of the potential connections available to early Christian authors. Similarly, the anchors in this chapter had wider *social networks* than their Christian associates. Again, it goes without saying that early Christian authors associated with others besides those who professed faith in Jesus and happened to be named in these letters.³³ However, this study is focused solely on their Christian social networks to the extent that they can be identified.³⁴ Even with this limited focus, such a study can reveal a great deal about the social nature of early Christianity.

2.1 *Early Christian Social Networks*

2.1.1 Paul’s Social Network

Paul’s network is the most expansive network that has come down to us from the earliest Christian generation. In terms of named individuals, there is no other or better attested network in earliest Christianity. They are named in connection with Paul and in connection with others.³⁵

32 It is a set of the wider Roman society, but that goes beyond the bounds of this chapter and will not be used in such a way here.

33 On the potential connections available to authors, Last, “Social Relationships,” 223–52.

34 On the possibility of other social networks, especially for the evangelists, see Last, “Social Relationships,” 223–52.

35 In examining Paul’s network, frequent recourse will be made to Acts in order to expand our view of a given individual’s relationship to Paul. This is not unproblematic given the debate surrounding the historicity of Acts and the “Lukan Paul” versus the “Paul of the epistles.” The primary objections to this revolve around an all too positivistic outlook.

2.1.1.1 *Peter*

Much has been made of the rift between Paul and the Jerusalem church.³⁶ However, Peter was one of Paul's earliest links and was a link that lasted throughout his ministry. In Gal. 1:18–19, Paul says that he went to Jerusalem to meet with Peter and James. These were the two greatest figures in Jewish-Christianity and Paul became linked to them three years after his conversion. The New Testament does not tell us how often Paul and Peter interacted.³⁷ According to Paul they interacted only three times (Gal. 1:18; 2:1–9, 11), at least up to the time he wrote Galatians. However, Paul's network interacted with Peter's network on other occasions. There was a faction devoted to Peter in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:12). Regardless of whether Peter had personally been to Corinth, it seems that his network stretched that far.³⁸ Additionally, we see further links between the two networks in 1 Peter. First Peter identifies both Mark and Silvanus as working with Peter (1 Peter 5:12–13), both of whom are linked with Paul (Mark: Col. 4:10; Phlm 24; Silvanus: 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1).³⁹ It is clear then that Peter is a part of Paul's network.

2.1.1.2 *James*

Paul was also linked to the other Jerusalem leader, James. As I mentioned above, Paul met James shortly after his conversion (Gal. 1:18). As with Peter, the two seem to have little direct interaction; Paul mentions only the first meeting and another some fourteen years later (Gal. 2:9). This second meeting established their working relationship (Gal. 2:9). Their (at least) third meeting occurred on Paul's final visit to Jerusalem (Acts 21:18–25).⁴⁰ Luke's account of the meeting

Luke's interest in his subject makes an objective retelling untenable according to Baur (*Paulus*, 8–9). Luke's handling of his sources "defigure history" (Alfred Loisy, *Les Actes des Apôtres* (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1926), cclvii). But, no history is so disinterested (Sir George Clark, "General Introduction: History and the Modern Historian," in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, ed. G. R. Potter [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961], xxiv–xxxiv; E. H. Carr, *What is History?* [Harmondsworth, UK: Pelican, 1964]). So, Paul's letters will be used alongside of Acts.

36 See Thompson, "Holy Internet, 58, 60." See also above pp. 56–7.

37 "Interaction" is a neutral term. One can have little interaction with another and still be a part of his or her social network. It is the frequency, durability, directedness, and content of the interaction that give interaction its significance.

38 Cf. F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1977), 259: "If Peter did not visit Corinth in person, then some others may have visited the city and church in his name."

39 Regardless of the question of the authorship of 1 Peter, Mark and Silvanus are associated with the Petrine network in a way that the author of the letter understood to be believable to his audience.

40 Luke implies another visit in Acts 18:22.

seems highly likely given Paul's anxiety about the visit in general (Rom. 15:31) and Luke's report of the spheres of activity between Paul and James to the Gentiles and Jews respectively (Acts 21:19–20), which matches Paul's account of their evangelistic focuses (Gal. 2:9).⁴¹ Similar to Peter's network, Paul interacted with James' network outside of Jerusalem at Antioch (Gal. 2:12). It is clear that, while their interactions might not have always been positive, James continued in Paul's network as their final meeting in Jerusalem shows.

2.1.1.3 *Barnabas*

Paul's network also included many others who were linked with the Jerusalem set: Joseph (Barnabas), Mark, and Silvanus. Joseph, though not a native of Jerusalem according to Luke (Acts 4:36), was linked to the disciples (Acts 4:36; 9:27). Indeed, Joseph was known so well to them that he seems better known by their nickname for him, Barnabas.⁴² According to Luke, Paul and Barnabas traveled together as missionaries around Cyprus, Pamphylia, and provincial Galatia (Acts 13:4–14:26).⁴³ Mark began the journey with them (Acts 13:5), though according to Luke, Mark left them and went to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).⁴⁴ Barnabas and Paul's working relationship ended immediately prior to Paul's second missionary journey. According to Luke, their partnership ended because of Barnabas' desire to have Mark rejoin them and Paul's refusal to have Mark back (Acts 15:37–9).⁴⁵ We do not know what happened to Barnabas after

41 Many scholars view this as a historical event. On its historicity see: Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*. Translated by R. McL. Wilson. Oxford: Blackwell, 1971, 611–2; Gerhard Krodel, *Acts*, ACNT (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 405–6; and Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 2, 1000, who says that a majority of scholars view the story as historical. For those who believe a historical event lies behind the narrative, but in its present form exhibits a great deal of Lucan redaction, see: Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 180–1; and Richard I. Pervo, *Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 542–3. For a skeptical view of the historicity of the narrative, see: Johnson, *Acts*, 377–9.

42 Joseph is referred to as Barnabas throughout Acts after Acts 4:36 until his departure from the narrative in 15:39, and also in 1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 2:11–14; Col. 4:10.

43 M. Jack Suggs, "Concerning the Date of Paul's Macedonian Ministry," *NovT* 4/1 (1960): 60–8, records the tensions felt by scholars trying to reconcile the words of Paul in Phil. 4:15–16 with the chronology of Acts. However, Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 136–7, adequately refutes Suggs.

44 Haenchen, *Acts*, 415, calls this "a firm piece of information."

45 The historicity of Luke's account here has been seriously questioned. See especially Haenchen, *Acts*, 475–7. However, I believe Johnson, *Acts*, 287–8, is correct in his critique of those who argue that the incidents in Gal 2:11–14 led to Paul and Barnabas' split. There is no indication that these events jeopardized their relationship; neither do any of Paul's other references to Barnabas in his other letters (1 Cor. 9:6; Col. 4:10), however brief, hint at either a "particularly close working relationship ... or an estrangement" (287). Johnson rightly concludes, "On the basis of the sources we have available to us, [the position that Paul and Barnabas' split was the result of the events of Gal. 2:11–14] is difficult to sustain ...

the split other than that he went to Cyprus according to Luke (Acts 15:39). The mention of Barnabas in 1 Corinthians (9:6) and Colossians (4:10) suggests continued evangelistic activity. His reputation extended to those cities at least, and Paul knew that it had. Whatever caused the split between Paul and Barnabas, it did not effectively end Barnabas' place in Paul's network. Paul was able to keep informed of his former partner's activities.

2.1.1.4 *Mark*

Similar to Barnabas, Mark's desertion, if indeed that was the cause of the parting of the work of Paul and Barnabas, did not end Paul and Mark's link either. In Phlm. 24, Mark is with Paul and greets the church in Philemon's home.⁴⁶ The nearly undisputed genuineness of Philemon assures us that at least Paul and Mark were reconciled as coworkers (Phlm. 24).⁴⁷ Whatever rift had been caused by Mark's earlier desertion had passed.⁴⁸

2.1.1.5 *Silas*

Silas, who replaced Barnabas as Paul's missionary companion, was also linked to the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:22). According to Luke, after the split, Paul took Silas with him on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:40). Thus, Paul was able to take another member of the Jerusalem community with him on his missionary journeys. Silas was more than a traveling companion. He coauthored two letters (1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1), and Paul identified him as one of the

If it is [Luke's] version that leads us to think that Paul and Barnabas had ever been closely associated in the first place, and it is only his version that speaks of their estrangement in such definitive terms, then it appears that his version must also be given some credit for the factors at work in both" (287–8).

46 A number of scholars (e.g. Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon*, 172; Bruce, *Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians*, 178; Dunn, *Colossians and Philemon*, 276; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Letter to Philemon*, AB [New York: Doubleday, 2000], 124; Bonnie B. Thurston and Judith M. Ryan, *Philippians and Philemon*, SP 10 [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005], 257), suggest that the Mark referred to in Philemon and the Mark referred to in Acts are the same person. There is no compelling reason to doubt that these two references are to the same person.

47 See, for example, the judgment of Fitzmyer, *The Letter to Philemon*, 8, which is typical: "Today the authenticity of the letter is almost universally admitted."

48 There are no accounts of Paul's activity prior to the split of Paul and Barnabas that indicate an imprisonment of Paul at which Mark would have been present. Though Sergius Paulus summoned Paul and Barnabas, there is no indication that it was for any judicial purpose or that Paul and Barnabas had been imprisoned prior to being summoned ("προσκαλέω," BDAG, 881 [1a]; "συγκαλέω," BDAG, 951 [2]). The traditional dating of Philemon after Acts 15 seems correct.

co-founders of the Corinthian church (2 Cor. 1:19).⁴⁹ Thus, Silas can be strongly linked to the churches in Macedonia and Achaia. As I mentioned above, Silas was also linked with Peter in Rome (1 Peter. 5:12).

These five links and their continued presence in Paul's network are particularly important because it is typical of Pauline scholarship to drive a wedge between Paul and Jerusalem after the Apostolic Council and the Antioch incident.⁵⁰ The two observations that Peter, Barnabas and Mark appear in Paul's letters after the incident and that Paul delivered a monetary gift to the church in Jerusalem show that Paul's set was linked with the Jerusalem church set after the supposed decline in relations. There were indeed some within the Jerusalem set whom Paul thought of as opponents (Gal. 1:6–10; 5:7–12; Phil. 3:1–3, 18–19). But, this only serves to reinforce the point that Paul was linked to the Jerusalem church, even through those who opposed him. Sim himself says that “the Jerusalem church meddled in the affairs of some Pauline churches in this period.”⁵¹ This “meddling” is a connection, hostile though it may be! Sim's claim also shows that early Christian travel patterns were similar, since the opponents travel to the same places as Paul. Paul's final trip to Jerusalem indicates that, while he was unsure about how his visit would end in light of difficulties he had faced from certain parts of the Jerusalem set (Rom. 15:31), it was ever a part of his network throughout his ministry. Now we turn to those Jewish connections that Paul formed outside of Syria and Palestine.

49 As with Mark above, several scholars identify the Silas referred to in Acts and the Silvanus referred to in Paul's letters as the same individual (e.g. Charles A. Wannamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*, NIGTC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990], 68; Earl J. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, SP11 [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995], 37; Barnett, *Second Corinthians*, 106 n.117; Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, AB 32B [New York: Doubleday, 2000], 97; Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 201; Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], 13). Again, there is no compelling reason to dispute this identification.

50 See for example, Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, trans. Frank Clarke (London: SCM, 1977), 283, who sums up this position, which he also critiques (283–305). Betz, *Galatians*, 83; Martyn, *Galatians*, 182; Rank J. Matera, *Galatians*, SP 9 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 91; O'Connor, *Paul*, 158; C. K. Barrett, *On Paul: Aspects of his Life, Work and Influence in the Early Church* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 85–90; Udo Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*, trans. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 139; James D. G. Dunn, *Beginning From Jerusalem*, CIM 2. (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2009), 491, are examples of those who hold the position that the Antioch incident ruptured the two sides.

51 Sim, “The Gospels for All Christians?” 12.

2.1.1.6 *Priscilla and Aquila*

Paul calls Priscilla (Prisca) and Aquila “coworkers” (Rom. 16:3). According to Luke, they first met Paul in Corinth after having been expelled from Rome by the edict of Claudius (Acts 18:2). They also traveled with Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18:18). Thus, they are clearly seen to be linked with Paul.

Beyond Paul, Priscilla and Aquila were linked to many. They became linked with Apollos at Ephesus (Acts 18:26). Given that they were in Ephesus when both Paul (Acts 19:1) and Apollos returned (implicit in 1 Cor. 16:12), they were likely the ones who introduced, and therefore linked, Paul and Apollos. Greetings from Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 16:19) and to the couple in Rome from Paul in Corinth (Rom. 16:3) further reveal connections between locales.⁵² They also traveled back to Rome, as is clear from Paul’s greeting to them in Rom. 16:3, when they had previously been with Paul at Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:19). From the time spent and connections made in the three cities, Priscilla and Aquila serve as one of (probably) many links between the churches of Rome, Ephesus, and Corinth.

2.1.1.7 *Apollos*

Paul calls Apollos “brother” in 1 Cor. 16:12. It is clear from Paul’s description of their two ministries that Apollos was a traveling evangelist like Paul, and not one of Paul’s subordinates (1 Cor. 1:35; 3:5–6, 21–22; 4:6).⁵³ Thus, the two are clearly linked, even in their different missions. Additionally, Apollos is yet another link between the churches of Corinth and Ephesus. Apollos can be found in Ephesus in Acts 18:24–27 and 1 Cor. 16:12 and in Corinth in Acts 18:27–19:1 and implicitly in 1 Cor. 1–4.

2.1.1.8 *Aristarchus*

Aristarchus, Paul’s fellow prisoner at the time of the writing of Colossians, was also a Jew (Col. 4:10, 11). He was with Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:29) and traveled

52 So, Head, “Letters of Claudius Terentianus,” 237: “Greetings serve to connect, through the vehicle of the written communication, the ... group around the sender with the recipient.” Head goes on to conclude on Pauline greetings, “Certainly [greetings] are very important to Paul, serving to connect different groups of Christians with each other, and thus ‘promoting unity and fellowship among the various churches.’” (238–9, citing Weima, *Neglected Endings*, 115.)

53 So, also E. E. Ellis, “Coworkers, Paul and His,” *DPL* 183.

to Jerusalem with Paul on his final journey (Acts 20:4). He also joined Paul on at least the beginning stage of Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 27:2).⁵⁴

Aristarchus has several other links besides Paul. He can be linked to Mark (Col. 4:10; Phlm. 24) and Tychicus (Col. 4:7, 10). He can also be linked to the Jerusalem church, and James specifically (Acts 20:4; 21:18). Luke calls him a Thessalonian (Acts 20:4; 27:2). While he was working as one of Paul's associates in Asia (Acts 19:29), he almost certainly made known the existence of the church in Thessalonica, and probably Macedonia more broadly. Aristarchus' greeting to the Colossians suggests he might have been well known in Asia (Col. 4:10). Thus, the potential exists for an early link between Macedonia and Asia.

2.1.1.9 *Andronicus and Junia*

Paul is linked to a Jewish couple in Rome, namely Andronicus and Junia (Rom. 16:7). It is clear they are linked because Paul knows that they were Jews, prisoners, "well known among the apostles," and had been Christians longer than he had (Rom. 16:7).

The phrase "well known among the apostles" has caused considerable debate;⁵⁵ I do not intend to enter into that debate here,⁵⁶ but point out only that both positions assume that by some measure Andronicus and Junia were known by the twelve.⁵⁷

2.1.1.10 *Titus*

I now turn to the Gentile members of Paul's network. Titus appears in Paul's letters as his earliest Gentile Christian associate (Gal. 2:1). He is linked to

54 Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 35 n.2, argues that Aristarchus accompanied Paul only to Myra before parting ways and returning home. Marshall, *Acts*, 424, and Bruce, *Acts*, 477, mention this as a possibility.

55 The debate is highly charged theologically since it affects the role of women in the church. For two recent examples, one from each side, see: Michael H. Burer and Daniel B. Wallace, "Was Junia Really an Apostle? A Re-examination of Rom 16.7," *NTS* 47/1 (2001): 76–91, and Linda Belleville, "Ιουνιαν ... επισημοι εν τοις αποστολοις: A Re-examination of Romans 16.7 in Light of Primary Source Materials," *NTS* 51/2 (2005): 231–49. David Huttar, "Did Paul Call Andronicus an Apostle in Romans 16:7?" *JETS* 52/4 (2009): 747–78, has attempted to move beyond the theologically loaded question by focusing on Andronicus. This move is more problematic since Junia remains in the text and the conclusions reached about her husband apply to her as well. Thus, removing Junia from the question does not obviate the tension; it only removes the woman from a discussion affecting women's roles in the church.

56 See Eldon Jay Epp, *Junia: The First Woman Apostle* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005).

57 Huttar, "Did Paul Call Andronicus an Apostle?" 747–8, summarizes both positions well, and shows how both readings reveal knowledge of the couple to the Apostles.

Jerusalem and Corinth in Paul's letters. Titus traveled to Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas and was linked to the leaders there (Gal. 2:1). He was also sent to Corinth with the Letter of Tears (2 Cor. 7:6) and again to Corinth along with the brothers (see below 2.1.12) to complete the collection for Jerusalem before Paul's arrival (2 Cor. 8:17). Titus had a strong link with the Corinthians and was also linked to James and Peter in Jerusalem.

2.1.1.11 *Timothy*

Timothy had a major role in Paul's mission.⁵⁸ He co-wrote five letters (2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1). Paul acknowledges that Timothy helped found the church in Corinth (2 Cor. 1:19). According to Acts, it appears that he also helped found the churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea with Paul and Silas (Acts 16:11–17:14).⁵⁹ Timothy is also listed as one of those who accompanied Paul on his final journey to Jerusalem by Luke (Acts 20:4).

As co-founder and co-author of letters to these cities, Timothy was linked to them. He also visited these cities on other occasions. Paul sent Timothy to Corinth to deliver 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:17) and to Philippi and Thessalonica to gather information about the communities in those cities (Phil. 2:19; 1 Thess. 3:2). Further, his journey to Jerusalem links him with the other delegates on the journey and with James (Acts 20:4; 21:8).

2.1.1.12 *"The Brothers"*

Toward the end of Paul's third missionary journey he told the Corinthians that he was accompanied by (and would be sending on ahead to the Corinthians) two "brothers" (2 Cor. 8:18, 22). The "renowned brother" is explicitly said to be traveling with Paul to Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:19), thereby confirming his link with Paul. The other brother had worked with Paul "often" (2 Cor. 8:22), again confirming his inclusion in Paul's set.

The renowned brother can be linked to others. First, it is explicitly stated that he would be going to Jerusalem, where he would be linked with the Jerusalem church. Second, Paul says that he is "renowned among the churches" (2 Cor. 8:18). One would expect that he was linked to at least some of these churches by more than reputation alone. That is, he must have been a traveling evangelist, who was well known in several locales. Following Blumell's

58 On identifying Timothy as a Gentile see: Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Was Timothy Jewish (Acts 16:1–3)? Patristic Exegesis, Rabbinic Law, and Matrilineal Descent," *JBL* 105/2 (1986): 251–68; Christopher Bryan, "A Further Look at Acts 16:1–3," *JBL* 107/2 (1988): 292–4.

59 While only the actions of Paul and Silas are recounted in the Acts narrative (Acts 16:19, 22, 25, 29, 38; 17:4, 5, 10) apart from the "we" sections (Acts 16:11–17), Timothy almost certainly must have been with them for him to have remained in Berea (Acts 17:14).

observation above, wherever the renowned brother stopped he likely created one or more connections between the community in his original locale and any given community in the locale in which he found himself on his travels, and presumably between the communities he had visited along the way.⁶⁰

2.1.1.13 *Tychicus*

Tychicus was linked to Paul as a letter carrier (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7) and was one of those selected to go to Jerusalem to deliver the collection as one of the representatives of the churches of Asia, according to Luke (Acts 20:4).⁶¹ Again, the journey to Jerusalem means links to others. Tychicus can be linked to the Jerusalem leaders, and to those on the journey, namely Timothy and Aristarchus who have already been discussed (Acts 20:4). He can also be linked to Mark since they spent at least some time together while Paul was in prison (Col. 4:7, 10).

Having mentioned the gift to Jerusalem many times now, it is important to note a few further observations regarding links before proceeding. First, the gift links the churches in several provinces together. All of the individuals on the journey should probably be understood as envoys in a way similar to the brothers in 2 Cor. 8:23. Paul's suggestion in 1 Cor. 16:3 that he would send the "approved" Corinthians "with letters" sets them apart for the task.⁶² While, according to Luke, no Corinthians took part in the delegation, there is no reason to suppose that those who did go were any less approved by their churches than the Corinthians would have been. As representatives of their churches, their actions had "ramifications" for their churches.⁶³ Many of these churches had been previously linked already. Aristarchus, the Thessalonian, had already spent time in Ephesus, as I mentioned above. Timothy is a link between the churches in Lycaonia and Achaia, Asia, and Macedonia; he had already spent considerable time in the latter three places. At the very least, Aristarchus and Timothy revealed that there were churches in these other locales. They likely

60 Here following Thompson, "Holy Internet," 58, that the early churches "hungered for news."

61 On the significance of Tychicus as a letter carrier, see Peter M. Head, "Letters of Claudius Terentianus," 243; and Peter M. Head, "Tychicus and the Colossian Christians: A Reconsideration of the Text of Colossians 4.8" in *Texts and Traditions: Essays in Honour of J. Keith Elliott*, ed. J. Kloha and P. Doble, NTTSD 47 (Leiden: Brill 2014), 303–15.

62 Cf. Head, "Letters of Claudius Terentianus," 243: "[The introduction of the letter carrier] may presume was intended to initiate a personal relationship between the letter carrier and the recipients of the letter."

63 See p. 20 above.

were also able to report on the last known condition of their home churches and of the churches they visited, as Timothy does explicitly in 1 Thess. 3:6 and is tasked with in Phil. 2:19.⁶⁴ Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollos likewise have already been mentioned as links between Achaia and Asia so that it is likely that at least some members of the churches were connected. In addition to linking all of these places around the Aegean, it links the churches to Jerusalem. Paul clearly thought the gift would engender some form of reciprocity between Jerusalem and at least Corinth, but there is no reason to suppose that this reciprocity should be limited only to Corinth.⁶⁵ Thus, the journey to Jerusalem was intended to have significant implications for the links between churches. Whether this reciprocity was accomplished is unknown, but the delegates did meet James according to Acts (Acts 21:18), so we may still safely link them.

2.1.1.14 *Phoebe*

Returning to Paul's coworkers, Paul calls Phoebe a *διάκονος* of the church in Cenchrae. She was clearly a woman with means since Paul said she had been a benefactor to many, including himself (Rom. 16:2).

Her journey to Rome would be yet another link between Corinth and Rome.⁶⁶ Priscilla and Aquila, who had lived in both cities, have already been shown to be a link. Corinth's role in trade between Italy and Asia,⁶⁷ however, makes it highly likely that there were other links between the cities. And we know that links between the two cities existed at the end of the first century from 1 Clement (preface) and into the second as revealed in the letters of Dionysius of Corinth (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.23.9).

2.1.1.15 *Local Co-workers*

There are some individuals who are linked to Paul who appear to be local leaders in their respective congregations. These include Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus from Corinth (1 Cor. 16:15–6) and Epaphras from the churches

64 Titus also reports on the church in Corinth (2 Cor. 7:6, 13–14).

65 On the expected reciprocity between Jerusalem and Corinth, see: John M. G. Barclay, "Paul and the Gift to Jerusalem: Overcoming the Problems of the Long-Distance Gift" (paper presented at Engaging with Poverty in the Early Church and Today. Twickenham, UK, 4 December, 2015). On the expected reciprocity of gifts in the wider Greco-Roman world see: John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 24–51.

66 Paul's recommendation of Phoebe to the Roman Christians suggests this connection. Cf. p. 113. See also discussion in Blumell, "Mapping Christians," 123.

67 Strabo, *Geogr.* 8.6.20.

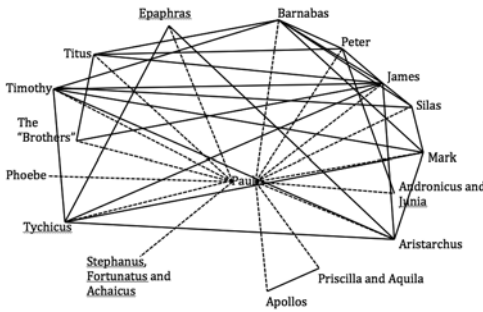


FIGURE 4
Paul's network

of the Lycus Valley (Col. 1:7; 4:13). Little else is known about these individuals, but they are local leaders approved by Paul (1 Cor. 16:18; Col. 4:13; respectively).

All these individuals create links between communities as well. Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, whom Paul considers representatives of Corinth (1 Cor. 16:17), serve as further links between Corinth and Ephesus. Epaphras linked Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, since he “had labored hard” among all those churches (Col. 4:13). While this is a much smaller area, it helps to reinforce the point that churches were linked in many ways, both locally and over greater distances.

Paul's network is the clearest in the New Testament due to his corpus and the narrative of his mission in Acts. Therefore, it has been given extended space to show connections between Jews and Gentiles, and their links with one another. These connections reveal a dense network (Figure 4).

Many of Paul's associates were from Jerusalem and he linked some of his Gentile converts to the Jerusalem church as well. From Paul's network, we see that within thirty years there was a Christian network spreading from Jerusalem across Asia Minor and Greece to Rome, but it is possible that this was already an expansive network.

It is important to note that those nodes that appear less connected (e.g. Apollos) only appear so because they are not linked to names in our sources. Apollos, to focus on just one, is only linked to Priscilla and Aquilla. He obviously had greater Christian connections than we can know. He spent time in Corinth and Ephesus. In Corinth, he was involved among the Christians there to the extent that at least some were devoting themselves to him (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4). This, again, serves to show just how much has been lost to history, but how important what has come to us is. Paul's network, even with the little we have, shows a densely connected network.

2.1.2 Jewish Christianity

Scholars have understood “Jewish Christianity” in a variety of ways, so it is important to define what I mean by the phrase.⁶⁸ “Jewish Christianity,” as Hagner rightly notes, “was anything but a single, unified phenomenon.”⁶⁹ It existed throughout the Mediterranean world and was influenced by Hellenism.⁷⁰ I will use Hagner’s definition of Jewish Christianity: “Those forms of Christian faith held by Jewish Christians of the first few centuries.”⁷¹ The vagaries of this definition are acceptable for my purposes since “just as there were various manifestations of Judaism prior to A.D. 70, Jewish Christianity was itself a varied phenomenon” and is indeed one of the “various manifestations of Judaism.”⁷² Additionally, in what follows I will be dealing in general terms with the kinds of networks available to Christian Jews insofar as they might be similar to Jewish Diaspora networks, not least of which because Christian Jews were still Jews.

Diaspora Judaism was diverse.⁷³ As Barclay says, “There were no ‘typical’ Diaspora conditions.”⁷⁴ In what follows, my concern is to highlight general characteristics of Mediterranean Jewish Diaspora communities. My focus, like Barclay, “is analogic (in what respect might have been *socially similar*).”⁷⁵ While generalities might be dangerous in light of the diversity displayed in Diaspora Judaism, there are certain aspects which hold Diaspora Jews together.⁷⁶ In the same way, Christian Jews were a diverse group. To create a continuum for illustrative purposes, Paul can be placed on one extreme, and those troubling Paul’s communities in Galatia on the other. Still on that continuum we might locate other non-Jesus believing Jews. We see that there is diversity among Jewish Christians, but apparently the central aspect that held them together

68 See the discussion in James Carleton Paget, “The Definition of the Terms *Jewish Christian* and *Jewish Christianity* in the History of Research,” in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries*, eds. Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 22–52.

69 D. A. Hagner, “Jewish Christianity,” *DLNT* 579.

70 Hagner, “Jewish Christianity,” 579.

71 Hagner, “Jewish Christianity,” 579.

72 Hagner, “Jewish Christianity,” 579.

73 On the diversity in Diaspora Judaism, see Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*.

74 Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 399.

75 John M. G. Barclay, *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 10, italics original.

76 On the aspects that hold Diaspora Jews together, see Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 402–42.

was Christ, and proclamation of him (Gal. 1:6–9).⁷⁷ Keeping in mind these differences, below I will suggest possible network connections that might have existed to which Christian Jews had access.

The letter of James is ostensibly a Diaspora letter.⁷⁸ I consider what kind of links such an address implies about the connections of the Jerusalem church. If the author was writing for communities outside Jerusalem, what links could he (to use the traditional author's gender) expect to carry his letter to those communities?

The simple answer is that there were many links between Jerusalem and Jewish diasporan communities. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem during festivals, the delivery of the tithe, traveling teachers, and letters sent to diasporan communities reveal the wide-ranging links that might have existed from Jerusalem to outside communities.⁷⁹ While the number of pilgrims who came to festivals is unknown, the references to them in different sources indicate that pilgrims did travel from the Diaspora to Jerusalem. Josephus recounts on one occasion that three million people came to Jerusalem for one Passover (*J.W.* 2.14.3 §2.280) and 2,700,200 people on another occasion (*J.W.* 6.9.3 §6.425). Such numbers are unbelievable, but they do show that diasporan Jews came to Jerusalem. Further, Acts 2:5, 8–11 recounts diasporan Jews from across the Roman Empire and beyond in Jerusalem. Similarly, Philo says that “innumerable people from innumerable cities, from the east, west, north, and south, across land and sea, come to Jerusalem for every festival” (*Spec.* 1.69). Philo also says that one of the key aspects of these pilgrimages was the forming of friendships with those previously unknown, sealed by the sharing of sacrifices and drink offerings (*Spec.* 1.70).⁸⁰ That is to say, those diasporan Jews who traveled to Jerusalem created links among Jews in the land and other diasporan Jews.⁸¹

77 Cf. Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1990), 5: Gospel (i.e. the proclamation) was “a technical term for both the action of the proclamation and for the content of the message ... in the early Christian usage the word refers exclusively to the one and only saving message of Christ.”

78 See pp. 49–51 above regarding the issues that complicate an identification of the addressees.

79 See also the discussions in Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 418–24; Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 246–52; Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Travel in Antiquity*, TSAJ 144 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 374–83.

80 This point is also highlighted by Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 423.

81 See also Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 419, 421–2.

Closely related to pilgrimages to Jerusalem for festivals was the journey to Jerusalem to deliver the temple tax.⁸² Philo and Josephus both refer to those who carried the tax to the temple (Philo, *Legat.* 156; *Spec.* 1.78; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.9.1 §§18.312–313). Josephus records that the tax was delivered by what can only be described as an army in order to keep it safe from those who might wish to plunder it on the way (*Ant.* 18.9.1 §18.313). Again, the number Josephus describes in the guard, 10,000 men, is open to doubt, but it reinforces the image of a number of diasporan Jews traveling to Jerusalem, and doing so on a regular basis.

Traveling teachers also confirm links between the communities. The evidence here is admittedly scantier than that discussed in the previous two paragraphs, but it is the cumulative case of the previous examples that make this a probable historical reconstruction. First, Mark 3:22 and 7:1 appear to offer evidence that scribes traveled from Jerusalem, which evidence Schams says is likely historical since they are described in relation to Jerusalem, the capital, where their “prestige ... and legal expertise” might have afforded them authority.⁸³ Second, there is a possible example of traveling teachers in Matthew 23:15, where Jesus curses the scribes and Pharisees for proselytism.⁸⁴ While Second Temple Jews do not seem to have been particularly zealous in their evangelistic efforts,⁸⁵ the words of Jesus might suggest that religious leaders did at least travel for the purpose of teaching other Jews. Paul and Barnabas’ invitation to speak at the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:15), suggests a familiarity of traveling teachers being permitted to speak in synagogues.⁸⁶ Later examples can be seen in y. Hag. 1:7, 1.2.A and y. Hag. 1:8, 1.3.L, M. In y. Hag. 1:7, 1.2.A, Rabbi Yudan sends Rabbis Hiyya, Assi, and Ammi to the towns

82 On this topic, see also Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 417–8.

83 Christine Schams, *Jewish Scribes in the Second Temple Period*, JSOTSup 291 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 162.

84 See Scot McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

85 Or indeed to have carried out evangelistic activities at all. See Eckhard Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission: Jesus and the Twelve*, vol. 1 (Leicester: Apollos, 2004), 92–172. Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 85–7, however, suggests that there were a variety of positions taken by first century Jews toward converting their Gentile neighbors.

86 Cf. Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, rev. & ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black, vol. 2 (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 435; and Haenchen, *Acts*, 408, say that it was customary to ask strangers beforehand if they would like to speak on the basis of this verse. C. K. Barrett, *Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 1, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 628–9, says similarly that the ἀρχισυνάγωγος (Acts 13:15) was responsible for arranging people to preach, though Barrett leaves open the possibility that Luke thought that this was something that the ἀρχισυνάγωγος did.

to provide scribes and teachers. In y. Hag. 1:8, 1.3. L, M, Rabbi Hiyya is given a letter of recommendation (the contents of which are given twice), so that he can “go abroad” to make a living teaching.⁸⁷ Hezser notes the travel undertaken by Rabbis around Palestine, Syria, and Egypt.⁸⁸ Although in some instances the travel undertaken to these regions was for business purposes, visiting Rabbis were sought out to preside over cases (y. Quid. 3:14 64d), and thus exercise an authoritative position in the communities that they visited.⁸⁹ Thus, we have some, admittedly scanty, evidence of the traveling of Jewish scribes and teachers, which suggests connections between Jerusalem and Jewish communities outside of Jerusalem.

Lastly, letters connected Jerusalem to outside communities. There are numerous letters that have come down to us that suggest the ability of Jews scattered throughout the world to maintain contact with one another.⁹⁰ Regardless of whether these are all real letters, they demonstrate the perceived ability for Jews to send one another letters, which must have had some basis in reality. It is clear that the “letters” of Esther and Mordecai (Esth. 9:20–23), like the book of Esther generally, served as propaganda for the celebration of Purim.⁹¹ Regardless of the nature of these letters being real, the propaganda of the text worked, so much so that Purim was called “Mordecai’s day” in Egypt (2 Macc. 15:36).⁹² Somehow the message spread. It is similar to what Philo says, namely that the reports of the destruction of the synagogues in Alexandria would stretch from east to west on account of the Jewish network (*Flaccus* 45). It is unclear how exactly that news would spread, but it is likely that the sending of letters would be a part of it. It has also been argued that the close

87 On the travel of Rabbis, see Hezser, *Jewish Travel*, 241–62.

88 Hezser, *Jewish Travel in Antiquity*, 241–3.

89 See discussion on why Rabbis traveled and what they did in Hezser, *Jewish Travel in Antiquity*, 243–50.

90 E.g. Jer. 29:1–28 [36:1–28 LXX], 31–32 [31–32]; 4Bar. 6:19–25; 7:24–34; 2Bar. 78–86; 4Q550 frg. 1; 4QMMT; 2 Macc. 1:1–10a, 10b–2:18; Esther 9:20; Acts 9:2; y. Hag. 2:2, 77D. See discussion in Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 430–34. See also the discussion of the use of letters to maintain contact in the rabbinic period in Hezser, *Jewish Travel in Antiquity*, 255–62. She sees the letters mentioned in Acts 9:2 and 15:23–29 as early evidence of the central authority of Jerusalem found in the Rabbinic texts (259).

91 On labeling Esther propaganda see, Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 108–10. It seems possible that Purim was the Jewish celebration of a Persian celebration (similar to the way in which Christians have taken over certain non-Christian celebrations), which needed defending. So, Carey A. Moore, *Esther*, AB 7B (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971), xlv–xlix.

92 Cf. Doering, *Ancient Jewish Letters*, 166.

connections between Jewish diasporan communities allowed for the circulation of texts.⁹³

Taking all of this together, Stark has argued that the Jerusalem church made use of these connections. He argued that Hellenized Jews were the obvious choice for traveling missionaries because they were used to teachers coming to them.⁹⁴ Further, he said that “the missionaries were likely to have family and friendship connections within at least some of the diasporan communities.”⁹⁵ As we have seen from Philo’s statements about the sharing of meals during festivals, teachers having friends in the Diaspora is possible. Stark cites Paul as an example,⁹⁶ but it is likely that such missionary efforts existed prior to Paul (cf. Acts 11:19–20).⁹⁷ Regardless of when it started, Stark is almost certainly correct that the earliest mission began among pre-existing networks.

2.1.3 Johannine Social Network

The Johannine letters reveal the travel of the elder and his associates as well as the elder’s opponents. It is clear from 1 and 2 John that the elder’s opponents made use of the network in Asia. In 2 John, the elder’s command not to show hospitality to the opponents could be seen as implying that the opponents made use of the same network and should not be received (2 Jn. 10).

Further, 2–3 John reveal a network that stretched to other locales. The network included at least two other churches to which he hoped to travel (2 Jn. 12; 3 Jn. 14). Third John shows that the elder had several associates who traveled. The ἀδελφοί (3 Jn. 3, 5, 10) report to the elder about Gaius’ faithfulness (3 Jn. 3, 6), that is hospitality. This report indicates that they had recently visited him, and this is confirmed by the counter example of Diotrephes, who did not show hospitality to the elder’s emissaries (3 Jn. 10). More travel was to be undertaken by Demetrius, whom the elder commends and for whom the elder seeks further hospitality from Gaius (3 Jn. 5–6, 12). Similarly, in 2 John the elder hears of the behavior of the church (2 Jn. 4). The travel and the circulation of news amongst the churches confirm the networked nature of these churches.

93 Tessa Rajak, “Was There a Roman Charter for the Jews?” *JRS* 74 (1984): 118.

94 Stark, *Rise*, 62.

95 Stark, *Rise*, 62.

96 Stark, *Rise*, 62.

97 Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 26–7, 117, suggests that Paul lived in and learned from Gentile Christians after his conversion, which in turn shaped Paul’s understanding of the Gospel. Assuming Segal is correct for the sake of argument, and the evidence of Acts 11:19–20 suggests it is wise to think so, the mission to the Gentiles was not a Pauline novelty, regardless of whether it was initiated by Peter.

There are similarities between Paul's network and the Johannine network. These similarities include messengers reporting on the status of various churches, the one whom held a position of authority over these churches traveling between them, and those who are portrayed as opponents using the same network. Further, the travel undertaken by the Johannine Christians suggests further routine travel among these churches.

The Johannine Christians were certainly a distinct Christian set from other sets (or at least the author[s?]⁹⁸ of the Johannine texts held a sufficiently distinct vocabulary to separate himself or themselves from other articulations of the gospel). What is at issue is how much this distinction is pressed. Is the community cut off from others? Käsemann is the closest to affirming such a position.⁹⁹ However, most would find such a break too harsh. Given the similarities of connections to other early Christian networks, it is likely that the Johannine network was linked with other early Christian networks. For example, Cullmann, Brown, Ashton, and von Wahlde all think that the Johannine Christians knew other early Christian groups.¹⁰⁰ This knowledge of the other groups implies some contact, at least enough to know that the Johannine Christians disagreed in some form with them. It has recently been argued by Trebilco that Johannine Christians and Pauline Christians in Ephesus had "non-hostile" relations.¹⁰¹ He goes on to say, "Given [the] level of contact between early Christian groups it seems very unlikely that two contemporaneous communities in Ephesus would be totally unaware that there was another reasonably sizeable Christian group in the city."¹⁰² It is clear from language of "contact" that he believes there were links between the groups. If the Johannine Christians were not a distinct faction (i.e. their leader and his unique vocabulary took over pre-existing Pauline churches),¹⁰³ then they show the continued activity of the Asian network in the period after Paul.

98 The authorship of the Johannine texts has caused considerable debate. See discussion on the authorship of the Johannine literature in Brown, *Epistles*, 14–30; Painter, 1, 2, and 3, *John*, 44–51.

99 Ernst Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, trans. Gerhard Krodel, NTL (London: SCM, 1968), 39, "The independence of the communities and the differences of their conditions and expressions can hardly be exaggerated."

100 Oscar Cullmann, *The Johannine Circle*, trans. John Bowden, NTL (Oxford: SCM, 1976), 55; Brown, *Community*, 71–91; Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 173; von Wahlde, *Gospel and Letters*, vol. 1, 54.

101 Paul R. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, WUNT 166 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 590.

102 Trebilco, *Early Christians*, 592.

103 Cf. Hengel, *The Johannine Question*, 83. It is important to remember that we have no evidence of two communities meeting distinct from one another in our earliest sources.

2.2.4 Ignatius' Social Network

The Ignatian corpus (ca. 110 CE) reveals a significant amount of travel in the early second century, particularly in its presentation of Ignatius' journey to Rome. It is further revealed in the travel undertaken by the churches that sent representatives to visit Ignatius those from Asia and Syria. Finally, some of Ignatius's epistles look ahead to travel which was to be undertaken from Asia to Antioch. All of these travels reveal a dense network in Asia at the beginning of the second century.

Several individuals journeyed to Smyrna to meet with Ignatius. It is clear that Ignatius viewed these individuals as representatives of their churches because he says repeatedly that he welcomed the church in the individuals (Ign. *Eph.* 1.3; *Magn.* 2.1; *Trall.* 1.1). Onesimus, Burrhus, Crocus, Euplos, and Fronto travelled from Ephesus to Smyrna to visit with Ignatius (Ign. *Eph.* 1.3; 2.1), and Damas, Bassus, Apollonius, and Zotion travelled from Magnesia to Smyrna (Ign. *Magn.* 2.1). The bishop of Tralles, Polybius, travelled to Smyrna (Ign. *Trall.* 1.1). Burrhus (Ign. *Phld.* 11.2; *Smyrn.* 12.1) and Crocus (Ign. *Rom.* 10.1) continued on from Smyrna with Ignatius. The meeting of so many individuals from the different Asian churches in one place shows that at least they were linked together at this time, and probably even earlier. Trebilco has argued that the travel in Ignatius's epistles reveals that it was not "altogether unusual for one church to send a representative to another, or for Christians from one center to travel to another to greet a fellow Christian. *We may then be catching glimpse of connections, contacts, and travels that were not extraordinary.*"¹⁰⁴

The news of a peaceful Antioch triggered more travel (Ign. *Phld.* 10.1; *Pol.* 7.1). Ignatius wrote to the Philadelphians and Smyrnaeans to send delegates to Antioch (Ign. *Phld.* 10.1; *Smyrn.* 11.2–3; *Pol.* 7.2). Travel to Antioch was not limited to these two churches, however. Ignatius told the Philadelphians that some of the churches near Antioch had sent bishops and others had sent elders and deacons (Ign. *Phld.* 10.2). Additionally, Ignatius wrote to Polycarp, requesting him to write "to the churches farther on" (Ign. *Pol.* 8.1), by which he means at least the churches in Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles.¹⁰⁵ Not only did Ignatius write to Polycarp asking him to write to these churches, but he asked the Philippians to write to Polycarp as well on the matter (*Pol. Phil.* 13.1), which implies another messenger on another journey. The letters of Polycarp to these churches also indicate a messenger (or messengers) that would have traveled

Individual house churches perhaps (cf. Rom. 6:5), but that is a far cry from two distinct groups meeting individually.

104 Trebilco, *Early Christians*, 708, italics added.

105 Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 279.

to “the churches farther on” (Ign. *Pol.* 8.1). The result of the news of peace at Antioch was a considerable amount of travel around Syria, as Ignatius suggests in his letter (Ign. *Phld.* 10.2) and in Asia and Macedonia, as evidenced by the expected messengers and letters.

Beyond showing the travel undertaken by these Christians, these letters exhibit an expansive network through which news spread. It is clear that the news that Ignatius was in or on his way to Smyrna had found its way to Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles.¹⁰⁶ The combination of the Ephesians, Magnesians, and Trallians in Smyrna confirm that these churches were linked. The links between the cities of Asia, especially in the south, had long been established, beginning from the time of Paul through the period of the writing of Revelation to the time of Ignatius. It seems that the links between Ephesus and Smyrna were particularly strong, since Polycarp was mentioned in passing without giving his title (Ign. *Eph.* 21.1; cf. *Magn.* 15.1). Crocus too was part of an old link between Smyrna and Ephesus (cf. Rev. 1:11), and he was yet another link between Ephesus and Rome, a link that at this point had existed at least since the time of Priscilla and Aquila, though it seems likely that the Christian links in those cities existed prior to Priscilla and Aquila given trade between the cities.¹⁰⁷ The ties between Syria and Cilicia and Asia Minor were strengthened not only through Ignatius, but through Philo and Rhaius as well (Ign. *Phld.* 11.1; *Smyrn.* 10.1). It is clear that amongst the churches of Syria and Cilicia there was a close network too, given that the churches in those regions sent representatives to Antioch (Ign. *Phld.* 10.2).

2.1.5 Polycarp's Social Network

Polycarp's letter to the Philippians (ca. 115 CE) demonstrates the travel about to be undertaken to Syria (*Pol. Phil.* 13.1) and adds a further link to the network of Asia. The new element is the contact between the Smyrnaeans and the Philippians. Crescens, the deliverer of Polycarp's letter to the Philippians, had been to Philippi at least once prior to the delivery of this letter, and would be going again to deliver Polycarp's letter; Polycarp also says that Crescens's sister would be going to Philippi (*Pol. Phil.* 14.1). This suggests that the Asian network stretched across the Aegean to Macedonia as well because of the travel of the recommended Crescens on multiple occasions and the circulation of texts from Smyrna to Philippi. The potential for this crossover, as I have said, began earlier than in Polycarp's letter during the time of Paul, but there is another definitive link in Polycarp's letter.

¹⁰⁶ Ign. *Phld.* 6.3 makes it clear that Ignatius's route went through Philadelphia.

¹⁰⁷ Strabo, *Geogr.* 8.6.20.

2.1.6 Early Christian Travel and Networks: Conclusion

Early Christian letters reveal an extensive network. Individuals operated primarily among sets defined around theology, etc., but that does not preclude them from interacting with those in other networks. From the evidence of the earliest letters, it is clear that links between the sets occurred, sometimes leading to conflict (e.g. Galatians) and sometimes leading to comfort (e.g. Col. 4:9). I want to emphasize this point here. As Weima and Head point out, the greetings in letter closings emphasize the connections between individuals and communities.¹⁰⁸ Above, I mentioned a few of those greeted in Paul's letters, and how they reveal the network in which he is central, including Andronicus and Junia. Romans 16:3–15 fill out the picture of Paul's connections in Rome.¹⁰⁹ In Romans 16:16, Paul appears as the representative of the churches he founded "from Jerusalem to Illyricum" (Rom. 15:19), connecting them to the church of Rome.¹¹⁰ Jewett, however, suggests that Paul is speaking not as the sole representative figure, but passing on the greetings from the representative figures with him on their way to Jerusalem.¹¹¹ The explicit greetings of those Corinthian Christians in Rom. 16:23 seem to corroborate Jewett's point. Whether Paul alone is a representative figure or Paul plus others, the goal of Rom. 16:16b is to connect those churches founded by Paul with the community in Rome. The connection between communities can be found in 1 Corinthians as well. Above I suggested that Priscilla and Aquila were a connection between Corinth and Ephesus, but Paul says in 1 Cor. 16:19, that the churches of Asia greet the Corinthians. It is, of course, unlikely that all of the Christians of the churches of Asia knew the Corinthian Christians or that they had all been consulted in the greeting at all; nevertheless, the purpose of the greeting is to connect the communities in Asia to the Corinthian community. Similarly, wherever Philippians was written those who were with Paul, including those of Caesar's house, greet the Philippian believers (Phil. 4:22).

Other New Testament letters attest to these connecting greetings. The author of Hebrews greets the leaders and Christians residing in the place of destination of Hebrews, as do the Italians residing near the author (Heb. 13:24). The church (ostensibly) in Rome greets the various churches in the imperial

108 Above, p. 104 n.13.

109 That Romans 16 belongs to the rest of the letter, see Gamble, *Textual History of Romans*.

110 So, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, AB 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 742; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, SP 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 454; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 927.

111 Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 976.

provinces of Pontus-Bithynia, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Asia (1 Pet. 5:13).¹¹² The members of the church near the elder greet their “sister” church (2 Jn. 13), and again in 3 Jn. 15, those with the elder greet those near Gaius. All these greetings, from individuals and congregations in the Pauline and catholic writings, reveal a tremendous amount of networking and connection making on the part of the early church.

We can also find these connecting greetings in the letters of Ignatius. The Ephesians greet the Smyrnaeans, and those other churches who visited Ignatius also greet them (Ign. *Magn.* 15.1). Similarly, those churches with Ignatius greet the Trallians, with Ephesus and Smyrna earning special mention (Ign. *Tral.* 12.1; 13.1, respectively). In *Romans* 9.3, Ignatius sends greetings to the Romans on behalf of the churches with him, “even those churches that did not lie on the route.” Those in Troas greet the Philadelphians and Smyrnaeans (Ign. *Phil.* 11.2; *Smyrn.* 12.1). Interestingly, in the letters sent to Smyrna (Ign. *Smyrn. Pol.*), where Ignatius had spent time, and made connections, he greets a number of individuals, something not found in his other letters (Ign. *Smyrn.* 13.1–2; *Pol.* 8.2–3). In this instance, at least, personal greetings seem to suggest personal knowledge of the two parties. This is also suggested in Paul’s greetings to those he knows in Rome (Rom. 16:3–15), though it is unsure if the third-party greetings also suggest knowledge between the parties or are attempts to create links. Regardless, we see that greetings attest to the connections and networks made in early Christianity.

I want to highlight the connections especially apparent in Asia. At times I will repeat various claims from above, but to lay them all out consecutively, unbroken by various sections highlights just how connected the churches in this province were, both with other churches in the province and those outside. From Paul’s letters we see that Paul, in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:8), hears about what is happening in Corinth from Chloe’s people, wherever they were from (1 Cor. 1:11). Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, from Corinth (1 Cor. 16:15) make up for the absence of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:17) while Paul is in Ephesus. In 1 Corinthians, the Asian churches greets the church in Corinth, as do Aquila and Prisca in particular (1 Cor. 16:19). There is a chance that Apollos would be leaving Ephesus to visit the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:12), but he did go to Corinth prior to this with a letter of recommendation from the Ephesians

112 The use of “Babylon” as code for Rome occurred often in Jewish and Christian literature (2 Bar. 11:1; 67:7; 77:12, 17, 19; 79:1; 80:4; 4 Ezra 3:1–5:20; 10:19–48; 11:1–12:51; 15:43–63; 16:1–34; Sib. Or. 3:63–74, 303–13; 5:137–78; Rev 14:8; 16:19; 18:2, 10, 21), and it is likely that this is what is happening here. Further, the origin of 1 Peter in Rome is attested early by Papias (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.15.2). See discussion in Elliott, *1 Peter*, 132.

(Acts 18:27–8).¹¹³ Paul greets Epenetus, who Paul calls “the first fruits of Asia,” in Rome (Rom. 16.5). Philemon (and I would argue Colossians but certainly at least Philemon) is evidence for wider mission work in Asia during Paul’s life (Phlm 23; cf. Col. 4:12).¹¹⁴ Colossians, regardless of when it was written, shows the connections between Colossae, Hierapolis, and Laodicea (Col. 2:1; 4:13, 15–16). From the Johannine literature, we see that 2 and 3 John reveal connections between Christians, presumably in Ephesus, with those outside Ephesus by both those in the service of the elder (3 Jn. 3, 5–8) and those opposed to him (2 Jn. 10).¹¹⁵ The seven churches of Revelation 2–3 likely indicates that John is writing to all the churches in provincial Asia, or possibly the whole church, given the symbolic nature of the number seven.¹¹⁶ However, it is likely that these seven churches in particular were chosen because they “constituted a circuit.”¹¹⁷ From the letters of Ignatius we see that messengers traveled ahead of Ignatius to tell the communities at Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles of Ignatius’ journey, and representatives from these communities were sent to Smyrna to greet him.¹¹⁸ Like we saw in 1 Corinthians, various churches in Asia greet one another in the letter closings in Ignatius’ letters. Philo and Rhaius Agathopous from Cilicia and Syria, respectively, followed him through Philadelphia (Ign. *Phld.* 11.1) and Smyrna (Ign. *Smyrn.* 10.1) and told him there was peace in Antioch (Ign. *Phld.* 10.1; *Smyrn.* 11.1–3). Ignatius asked for the churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna to send letters and/or messengers to Antioch (Ign. *Phld.* 10.1–2; *Smyrn.* 11.2–3; *Pol.* 7.2). Ignatius tasks Polycarp to write to the churches “farther on,” presumably Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles, so that they can also send letters or individuals to Antioch (Ign. *Pol.* 8.1). From Polycarp’s letter we see that the Philippian church sent a letter congratulating the Antiochian church for achieving peace to the church Smyrna, who carried it on to Antioch (*Pol. Phil.* 13.1).

113 The overlap of Acts and 1 Cor. 16 suggests “reliable tradition.” (Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 116.)

114 Cf. Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 145.

115 See the discussion of the place of authorship of the Johannine literature in Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 241–63. Marshall, *Epistles*, 47, simply concludes, “The long established view that the Epistles were addressed to communities in Asia Minor is still the most probable.”

116 Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 297. That the seven churches are symbolic of all the churches in provincial Asia see, Wilfrid J. Harrington, *Revelation*, SP 16 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993), 45. G. K. Beale, *Revelation*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 33, lists both options as a possibility.

117 Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 297.

118 Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 707.

Based on the evidence from Ignatius and Polycarp, Trebilco makes two important observations for my purposes. First, Trebilco says, “We can suggest then that churches, at least those in the larger cities, were in regular contact with one another and had a sense of fellowship with each other. They probably would have known of changes and developments in the different communities.”¹¹⁹ Second, and more important for my purposes, he says, “The evidence also suggests that Christians in Ephesus would not have been insular and isolated, but rather would have heard of new ideas and new church practices from elsewhere.”¹²⁰

A number of points about the connectedness of early Christians are important. First, the activity of the Asian churches, however various the theological traditions represented in that province, evidence a densely connected network from the earliest stages to which we have access. Second, their connections extend out to churches in other cities (Corinth, Rome, Antioch, and Philippi in particular). These two observations seem to confirm Trebilco’s first point: that churches in larger cities were in contact with one another.

In figure 5, I have mapped the connections between provinces.

This mapping has been done apart from differing theological groups, because, as we have seen, differing groups turn up in the same locales. While in most instances in that mapping represent the connections of various major cities in a province to other cities (e.g. Corinth in Achaia to Ephesus, as seen above), the evidence from early Christian literature suggests a number of Christians from smaller cities traveling (e.g. Phoebe from Cenchrae to Rome). This mapping confirms the connections of larger cities assumed by Trebilco, while not neglecting the instances of smaller communities to be connected as well. Lastly, Ephesus would not be unique in being connected to several other churches in various places. Other communities in other cities would have heard of new ideas, for my purposes would have heard of new texts, and would have been able to get them from other churches. Paul’s letters, several of them written to major cities in the Roman empire, would have undoubtedly



FIGURE 5
Connections between provinces

119 Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 708.

120 Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 708–9.

been known to other communities. At the very least, the *Nebenadressat* would have known of the letters, but the connections between the cities seemingly would account for the passing on at least the knowledge of a letter and also a copy of the letter itself. Similarly, the connections exhibited in this chapter would seem to confirm the ability of the Gospels to travel beyond their initial places of composition, unless Gospel communities (i.e. the locales in which the Gospels were composed) were unlike other early Christian communities. Links, as we saw at the end of the previous chapter, were vital for the circulation of literature.

3 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that early Christians operated in densely connected networks that crossed traditional sets (e.g. Jew/Gentile) and were interprovincial (e.g. Asia/Macedonia). These observations have significant bearing on the previous chapters. First, it shows the networks that existed for the earliest circulation of letters. In the case of Paul's letters this was primarily through local networks. Revelation could also be added in support of these local networks since the author of Revelation expected his Apocalypse to be read (at least) in the seven cities of provincial Asia (Rev. 1:11). The command of the angel to "not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book" (Rev. 22:10) is an implicit command to circulate the work, following the explicit one at the beginning (Rev. 1:11). The Apocalypse was indeed circulated widely, and the seven letters were eventually interpreted to have been written "to all" (Muratorian Fragment 58–60).¹²¹ Additionally the warnings in Rev. 22:18–19 are the author's attempt to safeguard the copying of the text as it circulates.¹²²

However, we have also seen that the pre-existing networks between Jerusalem and Jews in the Diaspora could have been, and likely were used by the earliest Christians, who were Jews. Further, communities were sending requests for texts at least by the early second century as seen in Poly. *Phil.* 14.1, but given the examples of circulation across provinces seen in the previous chapter it is likely that it began earlier. It is all the more likely that this happened early, when one considers that the communities in which Paul wrote

121 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 105, finds the explanation of Ramsay that those specific churches were chosen in order to facilitate wider circulation still the most plausible (Ramsay, *Letters*, 171–196).

122 See similar attempts in 1 Enoch 104:10–13 and Let. Aris. 310–11. So, rightly, Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 105.

letters knew of the existence of those letters, since the host communities could have requested a copy from Paul or the addressed recipients.¹²³ Communities that Paul founded, even though they might not have been theologically homogeneous, had at least some members interested in Paul's articulation of the gospel, which might have driven the circulation of his texts.

These networks provided the means for circulating letters. They also would have played a role in the circulation of other literature.¹²⁴ Going back to the letters of Cicero and Pliny discussed in chapters two and three, we can see that it was through networks that other texts were circulated.¹²⁵ P.Oxy. 4365 (4th century CE) offers a clear example of Christians exchanging texts through a letter: "To my dearest lady, sister in the Lord. Supply the Ezra, since I supplied you with the little Genesis. Farewell in God from us" (translation mine). Further, the example of the Shepherd reveals that the church in Rome was linked to others and was able to circulate texts to them (Herm. Vis. 2.4.3 [8.3]). It is clear from the discovery of the text of the Shepherd in Egypt that the text did in fact circulate and circulated quite far from Rome within a few decades of its writing.¹²⁶

It is likely that the early church circulated letters and gospels they were incorporated into worship services very early.¹²⁷ It is clear from references in Paul's letters that he expected that they would be read in the presence of the gathered community (1 Thess. 5:27; Col. 4:16). Further, the exchange of the "holy kiss" seems to signify a group context for the reading of letters (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26), though this need not necessarily be the case.¹²⁸ Martyn has suggested that Galatians was similarly read in the various Galatian communities' gatherings.¹²⁹ Further, 1 Tim. 4:13 and Justin's *Apology* 1.67 both show that "in the first and second centuries Christians were already reading certain Christian texts regularly in liturgical settings."¹³⁰ Martin has suggested that it was the early practice that led to the later, wider adoption of the public readings in worship.¹³¹ I suggest that it was the circulation of texts that played a key role in this process as well. Certainly,

123 See above discussion pp. 60–61.

124 See especially, Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians*, 74–104.

125 Pp. 82–5.

126 Campbell Bonner, "A New Fragment of the Shepherd of Hermas (Michigan Papyrus 44–H)," *HTR* 20/2: 106.

127 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 96–99; Hurtado and Keith, "Writing and book production," 76.

128 Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 96.

129 Martyn, *Galatians*, 85.

130 Hurtado and Keith, "Writing and book production," 76.

131 Ralph P. Martin, *Colossians, the Church's Lord and the Christian's Liberty* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1970), 148.

texts were meant to be read in the context of the gathered community, but as texts from other communities began to be circulated the most opportune time for everyone to hear them would have been in communal gatherings. It was probably the practice of reading these circulated texts in worship gatherings that gave rise to their later, authoritative status, since as 1 Tim. 4:13 seems to indicate and Justin clearly does indicate these writings were read alongside texts that were already considered authoritative. It is likely that the Christian texts took a share of that authority due to their being read together.

Conclusion

1 This Study

GAC laid the groundwork for the work done here. I agree with Bauckham that Gospels should not be interpreted like epistles. The contributors to *GAC* discussed circulation. However, by marginalizing the role of epistolary literature in the discussion, they set aside evidence of circulation that could have furthered their argument. I argued that social network theory provides a corrective to this position. First, concerning the nature of the communities these texts were written to, social network theorists do not “assume the existence of uniformly cohesive and discretely bounded groups.”¹ This assumption seems warranted since, as stated in chapter one,

Studying group membership as having a uniform influence on members only makes sense if membership itself is uniform: if every group member shares the same relation to the group. This is rarely the case. Even when something that would be recognized as a ‘group’ exists, some members are more or less committed, more or less tied to other group members, more or less identified with the group or more or less recognized by others as co-members of the group.²

That early Christians do not exhibit uniform commitment to the group is easily demonstrable from early Christian letters. For example, those who went to temples and ate meat sacrificed to idols in Corinth (1 Cor. 8:10) clearly represent a different level of commitment from others (1 Cor. 8:1–13). And those who were “changing to a different gospel” in Galatia obviously exhibit less identification with the Pauline group and the Pauline articulation of the gospel (Gal. 1:6).

Concerning the use of letters, I said that epistolary literature was misrepresented in *GAC*. For example, although there is a focus on Pauline letters, their actual addressees are misrepresented. They are said to be for single communities even though several of Paul’s letters are addressed to multiple locales. The audiences in other epistolary literature, including the general letters and other early Christian letters, are similarly ignored for what they might indicate about author’s expectations of circulation. Further, the circulation of texts

1 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 13.

2 Marin and Wellman, “Social Network Analysis,” 13.

beyond their initial locales plays a limited role in *GAC*. It is clear from circulation beyond their initial locales that both Gospels and letters circulated similarly. That is, their generic difference did not entail differences in terms of the extent of circulation. Texts of both genres were circulated widely beyond their initial locales.

Second, in terms of the circulation proposed, I argued that social network theory also offers a way for seeing the actions of authors as acting similarly. For my purposes their similar action consists of circulating texts to multiple locales. Social network theorists argue:

People with similar attributes frequently have similar social network positions. Their similar outcomes are caused by the constraints, opportunities and perceptions created by these similar network positions. By studying behavior as embedded in social networks, social scientists are able to explain macro-level patterns not simply as a large number of people acting similarly because they are similar, but as a large number of people acting on one another to shape one another's actions in ways that create particular outcomes.³

In chapter one (and again in chapter three), I argued that the act of circulating texts beyond their initial audiences reveals that ancient authors retained little control of their texts after they were published. This represents a constraint on the options that ancient authors had in circulating their texts. This could account for ancient authors and early Christian authors expecting their texts to circulate to multiple locales.

In the second chapter, I extended the investigation to expected audiences. In that chapter, I showed that the view of the Pauline epistles in *GAC* as written to specific communities cannot be maintained for two reasons. First, if "specific community" is taken to mean "distinct and theologically homogenous," the Pauline epistles reveal that the communities he was writing to were not theologically homogenous, and other early Christian letters bear out similar communities with conflicting articulations of the gospel. Second, if "specific community" is taken to mean "specific locale," then this is also false because Paul explicitly addressed several of his letters to multiple locales. Further, those who argue for *Nebenadressaten* make a convincing case that epistles, even those written to a specific locale, had multiple addressees.

In the second chapter, I also extended the discussion to include non-Pauline letters, including letters from the general epistles and other early Christian

3 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 13.

letters. From these letters, I showed that numerous early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales. The authors of 1 Peter, James, and the Apostolic Decree appear to have made use of the Diaspora letter genre, which expected circulation to multiple locales. The addressees of the Apostolic Decree and 1 Peter make it explicit that the authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales. The seven letters of Revelation 2–3 and the Shepherd of Hermas were also expected to circulate to multiple locales. The addressees of Ephesians and Jude are ambiguous; this may have been deliberate on the part of the authors of the letters in order that they would circulate to multiple locales. If they were expected to circulate, it would not be surprising since many early Christian authors expected their texts to circulate to multiple locales. In addition to these texts, I discussed texts that were expected to circulate to all Christians. Given all the evidence found in this chapter for the expectation of circulation to multiple locales found in this chapter, it would be surprising if the evangelists did not expect their Gospels to circulate to multiple locales or all Christians as well.

In the third chapter, I examined the actual circulation of early Christian literature beyond their initial audiences. On its own, this is a fairly pedestrian observation. However, the circulation of both Gospels and letters beyond their initial locales reveals that early Christians did not view the generic distinction as making a difference in terms of how texts were circulated. The very act of circulation beyond their initial audience implies that early Christians believed letters to have a wider relevance than simply for the communities in which or to which they were written. I also argued that this circulation beyond the initial audiences suggests that there were social networks in place to facilitate the circulation of literature, since circulation was predominantly a social phenomenon in the ancient world.

The fourth chapter focused on the early Christian social networks that may have facilitated the circulation of texts. Paul's letters reveal an extensive network of Jews and Gentiles and those who came from several different provinces. These various individuals could have facilitated the circulation of Pauline texts to differing locales or between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Further, the greetings in the closings of Paul's letters reveal connections between communities.

I also argued that Christian Jews could have made use of an extensive network that predated Christianity. The travel of Jews in the Diaspora to Jerusalem for festivals, where links were created through the celebration of meals, to deliver the temple tax, and the general exchange of news through the network suggests that there was a pre-existing network that could have been exploited by the early Christians. Luke suggests that some of those who first heard the

gospel were those Jews from the Diaspora (Acts 2:9–11). This network could have also facilitated the circulation of texts like James or the Apostolic Decree.

The networks seen in the letters of Ignatius and Polycarp reveal a densely connected Asian network. News of Ignatius' journey traveled through the region, which led to the travel of individuals from various churches in Asia to Smyrna to meet with the bishop. Again, the greetings found in the closings of Ignatius' letters reveal the connections between communities in Asia (Ign. *Magn.* 15.1; *Trall.* 12.1, 13.1; *Phld.* 11.2; *Smyrn.* 12.1). Then, travelers from Syria and Cilicia arrive in Asia with news of peace in Antioch (Ign. *Phld.* 11.1; *Smyrn.* 10.1). When Ignatius receives this news, he writes to the Philadelphians and Smyrnaeans that they should write and/or send representatives to congratulate the Antiocheans (Ign. *Phld.* 10.1; *Smyrn.* 11.1–2). He also writes to Polycarp to write to other churches, inviting them to participate in the endeavor (Ign. *Pol.* 8.1). This suggests further activity in Asia. The Philippians, presumably at the behest of Ignatius, send a representative to Smyrna to deliver their letter for Antioch and to get copies of Ignatius' letters (Pol. *Phil.* 13.2). Thus, while the Asian churches can be seen to be densely connected, they are not bereft of connections to churches outside of Asia, as greetings to the Romans (Ign. *Rom.* 9.3) and Polycarp's exchange with the Philippians show (Pol. *Phil.*). Within this network, we see the exchange of letters as well (Pol. *Phil.* 13.2; and possibly seen in the allusions discussed in chapter four).

We can see the circulation of texts to multiple locales as *expected* by their authors within these networks. For example, the circulation of 2 Corinthians to other churches in Achaia likely occurred through networks in place in the region, as has been suggested by others as well.⁴ A close network of churches in the Lycus valley can be seen in Colossians (Col. 4:13), at least two of the members of this network were supposed to exchange letters from Paul with each other (Col. 4:16). The seven letters of Revelation 2–3 likely circulated from church to church along the road that connected the seven churches.⁵ I showed in chapter four that Christians could have made use of Diaspora networks to circulate their texts. This appears to have been what happened with the Apostolic Decree and, if the identification of James as a Diaspora letter is correct, as the letter suggests, it is possible that James circulated through this network as well.

4 E.g. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *II Corinthians*, AB 32 (London: Yale University Press, 2008), 106; Barnett, *Second Corinthians*, 61; Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 134.

5 Ramsay, *Letters*, 183–4.

The *actual* circulation of texts beyond their initial audiences can be seen to have occurred through network connections as well. The former and then renewed commendation of Crescens who delivered Polycarp's letter to the Philippians (Pol. *Phil.* 14.1), as well as Ignatius' letters (Pol. *Phil.* 13.2), suggests a connection between Philippi and Smyrna. Kim Haines-Eitzen suggests that the colophons of Mart. Pol. 22.2–3 reveal a private scribal network.⁶ While in many of the other instances discussed we do not know how circulation beyond the initial locale occurred, but given the frequency with which circulation occurred through social networks, it is entirely plausible that these texts were circulated to other locales through social networks.

Hill makes a compelling case that the Johannine literature, both FG and the Johannine letters, circulated around the province of Asia, which is the likely place in which they originated.⁷ If this is the case, we can see that a regional network circulated *both* Gospels and letters. However, FG also circulated to Egypt within about thirty years as indicated by P⁵².⁸ A number of other examples indicate the circulation of Gospels beyond the places they were initially written. The use of the Gospel of Mark by Matthew and Luke show the circulation of Mark beyond its initial locale. The compilation of the canonical Gospels in a collection further attests the circulation of the Gospels beyond their initial locales, since, as Bauckham notes, "No one imagines all three evangelists belonged to the same local Christian community."⁹ The manuscript remains in Egypt further attests the wide circulation of the Gospels, and it bears repeating that, the circulation of Gospels and epistles beyond their initial locales indicates that early Christians circulated their texts similarly.

The most important implication is that the burden of proof has shifted to those who would argue that the evangelists would have written a Gospel for a specific, isolated community. There is considerable evidence that early Christian authors wrote with the expectation that their texts would circulate beyond their initial audience. If the evangelists did not fit this model, they would be atypical rather than typical. If the evangelists or an evangelist should prove to have been an exception to the rule, then we might wonder how he would have understood his text for his community. It is clear that the early Christians circulated their texts beyond their initial locales. As stated above, this knowledge likely shaped the evangelists' understanding of what would have happened to their Gospels. Thus, anyone who would wish to argue that a

6 Haines-Eitzen, *Guarantians*, 80–1.

7 Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 361–74, 383–96, 416–20.

8 For a discussion on the date of P⁵², see pg. 98 n.150.

9 Bauckham, "For Whom?" 12.

Gospel was for a specific community would have to make an argument for why it should be viewed that way.

Additionally, there are implications for how the discussion about early Christian communities must be construed going forward. The overwhelming evidence suggests that early Christian communities were connected, as revealed in the circulation and in the structure of the early Christian clusters, and that many early Christian epistolary authors assumed that interconnectiveness when they wrote to one or more of those communities. Those who would ignore the circulation and the makeup of early Christian clusters “desire to see what ought to have been rather than what inconveniently was.”¹⁰

Part of the issue of viewing Christian communities as separate could be overcome by applying the insights of those who have sought to view Judaism and Christianity on a continuum.¹¹ This helpful, and necessary corrective, could help alleviate some of the issues plaguing early Christian community discussion. That early Christian clusters had disputes with one another is obvious from the texts. This does not deny their place related to one another on the continuum. As Boyarin notes, “We hardly have to assume noncompetitve or irenic relations between subgroups.”¹² What the corrective does, especially with the help of social network theory, is help us understand (and using social network theory show) that “there might very well be a gap between the explicit claims of certain texts that groups are different and separate and the actual situation ‘on the ground.’”¹³ The “situation on the ground” reveals “fuzziness at the borders,” which was what I showed in chapters 1 and 4. This would allow elements of distinction to remain without assuming totalizing commitments of those in a “community.”

2 Future Study

In light of these implications, there are a number of fresh avenues open for exploration and some old avenues worth reconsidering.

Changing the default understanding of community from isolated communities with distinct theologies can help explain old problems in new ways. For example, the inclusion of Asia and Galatia in the address of 1 Peter has been seen

10 Wayne A. Meeks, “Taking Stock and Moving On” in *After the First Urban Christians: The Social-Scientific Study of Pauline Christianity Twenty-Five Years Later*, eds. Todd D. Still and David G. Horrell (London: T&T Clark International, 2009), 136.

11 See especially Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 8; Reed, *Fallen Angels*, 125.

12 Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 11.

13 Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 10.

as problematic because they are viewed as Pauline territory.¹⁴ Because early Christian communities are viewed as isolated, this overlap must be explained away. For example, Davids says that Peter heard about localized persecution in the provinces through Silvanus, and then wrote to them, mentioning Silvanus and Mark whose names would have meant something to the people there.¹⁵ Neyrey cites several reasons why 1 Peter is not addressed to Pauline territory: 1) the provinces mentioned “presupposes an *extensive expansion of the Christian mission* following the activity of Paul”; 2) the “*rural*” features of the provinces other than Asia suggest a different emphasis from Paul’s urban mission; and 3) the situation in 1 Peter suggests fighting with natives with “Rome playing no role at all.”¹⁶ These points lead Neyrey to conclude, “These factors decisively *differentiate* the addressees of 1 Peter from the mission field of Paul.”¹⁷ One could argue against all three of the points made by Neyrey or the scenario envisaged by Davids, but this would be like trying to remove a weed without getting the root. The root of the problem is that Neyrey and Davids view communities as being isolated from other based on theological distinctiveness. The understanding of communities as connected with multiple, sometimes competing theological distinctions, as they are understood here, accounts for the circulation of a letter associated with Peter in “Pauline territory” because it is not actually *Pauline* territory.

Continuing to identify early Christian communities that manifest these multiple theological distinctions in the same locale would add further weight to the argument presented above that the concept of community as theologically distinct cannot be maintained. This focus need not be limited to letters; one could also examine Gospels, looking for various traditions in Gospels, as I have done,¹⁸ or Acts literature, both canonical and otherwise. Regardless of the historical value of later Acts literature, they might reveal knowledge of communities with varying levels of commitment and various theological beliefs in the same locales. ActThecla §1 (ActPaul 2.1) shares the belief of 2 Tim. 1:15; 4:10 that not all of Paul’s coworkers were loyal to Paul’s work. In ActThecla, not only are Demas and Hermogenes not loyal, but they appear to be gnostics with Paul whom Paul teaches as they travel (ActThecla §1).¹⁹ Connections between Paul and gnostic sympathizers, anachronistic though they be, suggests that

14 Davids, *First Peter*, 5; Achtmeier, *1 Peter*, 39; Neyrey, *1 Peter*, 90.

15 Davids, *First Peter*, 6–7.

16 Neyrey, *1 Peter*, 90, italics original.

17 Neyrey, *1 Peter*, 90, italics added.

18 Smith, “Once More,” 12–18.

19 Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction*, trans. Brian McNeil (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008), 52.

Christians in the second century were connected to and tried to instruct their gnostic neighbors.²⁰

There are also new avenues of research in Pauline scholarship. No work has been done on the particularity of Paul's epistles after Dahl.²¹ The multiple addressees in Paul's letters that appear to have the situation of a particular community in view throughout have caused problems for the interpretation of his letters since Christians first began commenting on them. For example, as I showed above, commentators must find some way of explaining the reference to Achaia in 2 Corinthians 1:1. This is not new. Chrysostom experienced the same dilemma over what a reference to Achaia doing in a letter that is primarily concerned with the Corinthians.²² Research could be undertaken investigating the significance of a text with the view of a single community that was expected to circulate to multiple communities.

Lastly, more work needs to be on early Christian social networks. What has been undertaken here was a preliminary investigation. There is more worth considering. If we are going to talk about early Christian clusters, we need to be concerned with the overlaps or connections that existed between them rather than focusing only on those things that divided them. For example, focus on social networks can help us gain a better understanding of early Christian conflict. Clark has used social network theory effectively to show how social networks played an important role in the Origenist controversy.²³ How might Barnabas's links with Jewish and Gentile Christians have affected his allegiance to Paul as reflected in the Mark incident in Acts 15:36–41 and the Antioch incident in Gal. 2:11–14 and the Apostolic Council in Acts 15/Gal. 2:1–10? Part of the answer to the previous question is bound up in social network analysis's investigation of types of links affect ties between nodes. For example, familial links are presumed to be stronger ties than friendship links, regardless of whether this is the case, which would account for Barnabas supporting his cousin, Mark, (Col. 4:10) against Paul.²⁴

Related to the issue of links between Paul, Barnabas, and Mark, one could study the significance of fictive kinship. Are links formed by fictive kinship as strong as ties formed by actual kinship or friendship? The use of fictive kinship

20 Given that our only sources for Gnosticism date from the second century and later, any identification of first century individuals as gnostic appears anachronistic. Cf. E. M. Yamauchi, "Gnosis, Gnosticism," *DPL* 350–1. On the date of Acts Paul, see Klauck, *Apocryphal Acts*, 50.

21 Dahl, "Particularity," 261–71.

22 Chrysostom, *Hom. 2 Cor.* 1.2.

23 Clark, "Elite Networks," 79–117.

24 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 12.

is littered throughout the New Testament and other ancient literature, both Jewish and Gentile. There is ample evidence to compare various understandings of fictive kinship, to which one can compare and contrast ancient understandings of fictive kinship with Christian fictive kinship. Jeremy Punt has done this, examining Paul's use of "brother" in Galatians.²⁵ There is still work to be done on fictive kinship in other early Christian texts such as the Gospels and catholic epistles.

Social network theory can be used to test the hypotheses of existing sociological studies, especially those studies that are focused on attribute or group-based approaches.²⁶ Social identity theory has become increasingly popular in New Testament studies. This approach is decidedly group based, even if it does at times use language similar of network theory. Social network theory can come alongside these readings and confirm, add necessary correctives, or reverse the conclusions of these earlier studies. At the very least, social network theory can challenge the idea of groups as "uniformly cohesive and discretely bounded."²⁷

Studies of social networks could extend beyond to Jewish-Christian relations as well. It is evident that the use of the Birkat Ha-Minim as the decisive split with the synagogue is an approach that has been found wanting.²⁸ There are a number of texts that might shed light on Jewish and Christian relations

25 Jeremy Punt, "He is Heavy ... He's my Brother: Unravelling Fraternity in Paul (Galatians)" *Neot* 46/1 (2012): 153–71.

26 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 16.

27 Marin and Wellman, "Social Network Analysis," 13. Cf. Esler, *Galatians*, 49, "The behavior characteristic of Galatians reveals a strong intergroup aspect with barely any sign whatever of interindividual conduct," or Atsuhiko Asano, "Galatians 2.1–14 as Depiction of the Church's Early Struggle for Community-Identity Construction," in Tucker and Baker, *Handbook*, 321, italics added, "As long as the [Jesus-community in Jerusalem] consisted entirely of Torah observant Jewish followers of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, both the Jerusalem leaders and the ψευδαδελφοί had no special need to be concerned with the idea of preserving Jewish ethnic identity."

28 I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), 252; Reuben Kimelman, "Birka Ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity," pages 226–44 in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, ed. E. P. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson, AJGRP 2 (London: SCM, 1981); Jonathan Bernier, *Aposynagōgos and the Historical Jesus in John: Re-thinking the Historicity of the Johannine Expulsion Passages*, BIS 122 (Leiden: Brill, 2013). See the excellent discussion in Boyarin, *Dying For God*; Becker and Reed eds., *The Ways That Never Parted*; and Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

from Acts to the Dialogue with Trypho.²⁹ In short, there are numerous possibilities that open themselves up to investigation using social network theory, which can further our understanding of early Christianity.

²⁹ Regardless of whether Trypho existed, Justin's dialogue suggests that channels for discussion between Jews and Christians existed into the second century.

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